1: Ammar E, I-5 (1951) 1954
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Silwa

sickness is a pious deed. It is often told to a sick person that holy people have suffered from one ailment or another and have endured it willingly for God.

All this shows how the villagers' traditional notions about health and sickness are mixed with magical and religious beliefs; God is the afflicter as well as the healer; it is He who has fixed the life span of every person, and this cannot be lengthened or precipitated by a second, much less a minute, unless He wills it. Together with this, there is the belief that hope and propitiation cannot fail to produce some expected results in certain crises of life.

The village has experienced some measure of direct contact with modern medicine as a result of the establishment of a health unit by the Ministry of Health in 1936. This health unit is a wonderful building, situated on the southern border of the village, and is composed of a maternity section, an isolation ward, and a general section. It cost the Government about £E3,000, yet it has never functioned properly or systematically as doctors who came to it could hardly endure life in the village for more than six months, whereupon they tried every possible means to be transferred to towns. The villagers appreciated the health unit at the beginning, but their resentment to it was ironically aroused during the malaria and typhoid epidemic of 1943 on the grounds that sick people were taken away to the isolation ward, and dying away from one's relatives and home is the worst thing that can happen to any person. Their hostility towards it is expressed with reference to its unfortunate location, it being near the cemetery; thus going to the health unit has become psychologically a bad omen. However, the establishment of the health unit has given folk-medicine the greatest challenge, and at present the villagers are becoming increasingly interested in medicine as such, alongside their usual traditional cures. In serious cases the doctor's help is usually sought besides the traditional cures, and it is becoming a sign of social prestige to bring him into the home of the sick; but remaining in hospital for treatment or isolation for contagious diseases is still resisted.

Although one finds that the villagers have adopted certain items of material culture from the town, such as the use of manufactured goods, new types of vegetables, and some medicines, such adoption is a surface substitution. Their ideas about land ownership, the importance of children, family and clan solidarity, categories of respect relationships, sex dichotomy, supernatural sanctions, and the importance of ritual and ceremony in both social and religious life, remain almost unaltered.

There is, however, one feature in the village's social life that has undergone a certain amount of change as a result of changes in the economic conditions, and that is the role and function of leadership. Till very recently leadership has been mainly connected with families owning large plots of land; and such families assumed the responsibility and obligation for receiving guests from outside the village, providing hospitality for

1: Ammar E, 1-5 (1951) 1954
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Silwa

854 garment. This cloth can be removed, washed, or just dried, or changed. The child is often wiped with another cloth, but is not necessarily washed, if it soils itself. At the fourth month it is supported between its mother's feet, sitting to defaecate when the mother senses that it is uncomfortable or when it cries, and the cloth is put on only when it goes to bed. No fuss of any kind is made about urine, while more attention is given to faeces, yet revulsion is never shown by the mother. When the child starts to walk
863 it is trained to say 'kaka' when it wants to defaecate, whereupon the mother lifts its garment and asks it to go to a special corner or room in the house or to go outside. After the age of three or four most parents insist that both boys and girls defaecate outside the house, or go to the special room in the house.

514 While the boys from now on always perform their evacuation outside, he girls are confined to the house again after they reach the age of twelve. Girls always squat for urination while boys stand, but on reaching adolescence the latter squat also. In the case of boys, the tucking up of the dress or pants and the crouching posture of evacuation tend to direct attention to the exposed genitals, while in the case of girls, after the age of six or seven at most, they, in contrast, envelop the whole process with their dress, which is never tucked up. One can see boys of all ages up to eight or nine evacuating within sight, with no sense of embarrassment. When they reach puberty they seek out-of-the-way places, facing a stone or a heap.

863 It is not without justification that one can make the hypothesis that the absence of disgust towards faeces and urine with regard to the infants' early training is a cultural way of conditioning the individual to bear tolerantly the odour that attends the village sanitary conditions, swamps, and handling of animal dung either as fertilizer or as fuel.

856 Sitting and teething are considered as important events to be watched in the child's growth. By the end of the fourth month the mother begins to train her child to sit up. The saying is that a boy of four months must be able to sit up, or he should be beaten. The girl is expected to be able to sit up a little later, at the end of the fifth month. The mother makes her son sit up on the ground with his legs outstretched, supporting his back with her hands, or puts him in a large mixing or cooking pan with tall curving sides. If the boy is not taught to sit up for himself at this age, and abandon gradually the horizontal suckling position, he would be liable to have an [827] unpleasant breath smell when he grows up.

It is also recognized that teething is accompanied by either ophthalmia [157] or diarrhoea. The mother's milk is sometimes used as a treatment for the sore eyes at this period.

852 On the first instance of the breaking of any of the milk teeth, at the age of five or six, the tooth is put into donkey dung and thrown into the 'sun's eye', asking the sun to change the donkey's tooth for a tooth of a gazelle.

[304] Another important event in the child's life after the end of the forty

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

smells it unconscious. Evidently the man induces his enemy to come to his house, and the latter, not knowing what has been prepared for him, becomes unconscious from the fumes before he has time to realize the trick played upon him. This method has been tried and has never failed, according to my informant.

In order to restore consciousness the urine of a man must be injected up the nostrils, which, I am told, is a sure restorative. Anyone who makes a fire of this kind must first take a mixture of *semn* (see p. 167) and olive oil, and stuff it up his nostrils to prevent himself also from being overcome by the fumes.

This device is likewise resorted to by people who are travelling across desolate and dangerous spots, where they are liable to meet wild animals. These, on sniffing the fumes from the fire, become unconscious, so that the travellers can pass them by in safety.

One day in 1926 when I was visiting a certain village in Middle Egypt one of my friends there, a very respectable and well-to-do man, came to see me and informed me that he had had several articles stolen from his house, and that he intended to call in the help of a magician who was clever at discovering thieves by means of divination. He invited me to attend the ceremony, which took place a few days later. The magician came from another village a few miles off, and was brought to me to be introduced. I ordered coffee and cigarettes, and after these refreshments had been partaken of we settled down to the business in hand. Some writing-paper was torn into small strips, and a different name, suggested in every case by my friend, was written on each. The magician produced a copy of the Ḳorān, and asked for an iron doorkey. One was brought, which he rejected, as he said it was not native-made. A suitable one, however, was found, and then the magician opened the book at a certain chapter, put in one of the inscribed slips of paper, and inserted the doorkey, leaving the handle of the key outside the book. This book and key were now bound together with string, in such a way as to prevent the key from moving. A pottery saucer containing a charcoal fire was then brought, into which the magician dropped incense. A third man who was present and the magician faced each other on either side of the burning incense, the Ḳorān being suspended by the key on the first finger of the right hand of each man (Fig. 118). The fumes from the incense rose around the Ḳorān, passages from which were recited by the magician. Presently the book began to move, and, according

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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are less ignorant, and learn to realize the importance of keeping their babies clean, it will be difficult, if not impossible, for the doctors to combat the many eye-diseases that cause so much suffering to hundreds of the peasants. With conditions as they are, cures for sore and inflamed eyes are much in demand and are numerous. The following are some of the remedies for eye-trouble employed by the village medicine-man or medicine-woman.

FIG. 121. A MEDICINE-WOMAN PASSING A PIECE OF MAIZE-STALK ROUND A FEMALE PATIENT'S HEAD TO CURE HER OF ILLNESS

The medicine-woman whose methods of healing I described above has a great reputation as an eye-doctor. Those who suffer from inflamed eyes and swollen eyelids often resort to her for treatment. She takes a lump of sugar, and, turning back the inflamed eyelid, rubs it inside with the sugar. "Black blood" comes away after this operation, so I was told. She then takes a large onion, extracts the juice, and mixes with it some salt. This concoction she drops into the eyes of her patient. "It is very painful," my informant told me, but she added that it did a lot of good. While the woman is rubbing the inside of the eyelid with the lump of sugar her patients often stop up their ears with their fingers, as this is supposed to decrease the pain of the operation. For three days afterward the eye, or eyes, must be kept covered with a handkerchief, so that no air can get in. At the end of the three days the woman gives her patient a second dose of the onion

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

juice and salt, and a few minutes later drops a mixture of *tūtia*[1] and honey under the lids. It is believed that after this the inflammation will quickly disappear.

In another village farther south there is also a woman who is regarded as an eye-specialist, and her knowledge of her art, together with one of the objects she employs, has been handed down in her family for two or three generations, so she told me. She has a large shell, called in Arabic *maḥāreh*, and a black stone called *ḥagar eṭ-ṭarfā* (stone of the tamarisk). She makes eye-medicine by first wetting the inner, concave surface of the shell, and then rubbing it with the stone (Fig. 122). She thus produces a white liquid which the peasants call 'milk.' They believe, as does the woman herself, that this 'milk' comes from the stone, whereas it comes, of course, from the powdering of the surface of the shell by rubbing the stone against it. The liquid is believed to be an excellent medicine for sore eyes, and people in her village who are suffering from that complaint visit the woman and get her to drop some of her medicament into their eyes. This eye-medicine is known in other parts of Egypt

FIG. 122. THE FEMALE EYE-SPECIALIST HOLDING HER SHELL AND BLACK STONE, WHICH ARE SHOWN BELOW

[1] Sulphate of zinc.

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt
Copts MR10

as well, but the people make it and apply it themselves, without resorting to any medicine-man or -woman. The shells are found in the desert, so that when one is worn out it is not difficult to get a fresh supply. The stones used are also said to come from the desert.

A certain sheikh, who combined the profession of magician with that of a doctor, told me that he often prescribed the following cure for inflammation of the eyes. Some lotus-leaves are pounded in a mortar and then mixed with goat's milk. The eyelids are bathed with this preparation two or three times a day, when all the fever disappears, and the eyes soon recover. A remedy of his for an eye that is injured from a blow is to take some palm-leaves and, after thoroughly washing them, put them in a mortar and crush the juice out with a pestle. Some salt is mixed with this juice and the mixture dropped on to the injured eye. Three applications, so he says, effect a cure. The woman eye-doctor last mentioned has a different cure for an eye injured by violence. She rubs her shell with the stone as before, and, mixing the liquid with molasses, bathes the eye with this preparation.

If a man is suffering from sore or watery eyes he must get two drams of opium and two drams of the seeds of *er-rashād* (nasturtium). These he must grind up together and mix with the white of an egg. Placing the preparation upon a piece of cotton material, he applies it to his eye or eyes. This is the prescription of a Coptic magician, who says that it is an absolute cure.

The peasants quite realize the value of massage, and both a male and a female exponent of the art are to be found in many of the villages. Their services are employed in obstinate cases of constipation as well as for the curing of pain in the back and limbs. A man or woman who is suffering from a pain in the back is sometimes treated in the following way. The 'doctor' makes his patient lie on the ground, face downward, and ties his ankles together with a rope, while with another rope his hands are tied behind his back. The 'doctor' then places his foot on the exact spot in the patient's back where he feels the pain, and, grasping with both hands the ends of the ropes which tie the man's hands and ankles, draws them upward, his foot pressing down the spine. Probably a crack will soon be heard, or the patient himself will feel that something has gone into place again in his back, and he will be cured. A woman attends

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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members of her own sex, and gives them the same somewhat drastic treatment.

A headache is sometimes cured in the following way. The magician in his capacity as medicine-man writes out a charm, which is hung on the patient's head over the spot where the pain is greatest. The charm must be written in a circle, and is, of course, in Arabic. Fig. 123 is an exact copy, only transliterated.

Sīdī Aḥmed el-Bedawī is one of the most celebrated sheikhs in Egypt. His tomb is at Ṭanṭa, where a great festival is held in his honour every year.

The following is a prescription for a disordered spleen. The magician fetches leaves of *el-atl* (tamarisk), pours red vinegar on them, and boils this mixture on the fire, afterward pressing it through a sieve. The patient must drink a coffee-cup of this medicine early in the morning, repeating the dose for seven days, during which time he must eat no solid food, but should drink soup made by boiling a fowl.

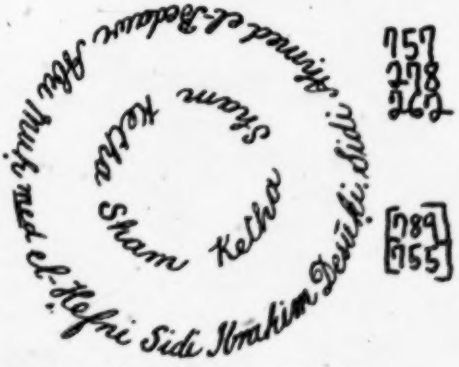

FIG. 123. CHARM TO CURE A HEADACHE

Distention of the stomach is a very common complaint among the peasants, due, of course, to acute indigestion. In some parts of Egypt a boiled crow is prescribed as a cure for this complaint, and the patient, I am told, quickly experiences relief after eating this most repulsive food. Another more reasonable cure is prescribed by a medicine-man of my acquaintance. A small quantity of flour is mixed with a little yeast early in the morning; this must be left to rise in the sun till mid-day, when sufficient water is mixed with it to form a liquid. Soon after taking some of this preparation the patient must drink some soup made by boiling a fowl. The bowels will then act, and relief be soon experienced.

If a woman is suffering from prolonged labour, and birth is difficult, her relatives will call in the aid of a magician. He writes two charms, in the form of two magic squares, on two separate pieces of paper. One square is suspended by a string from the woman's waist, so that the inscribed paper hangs over her left

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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THE VILLAGE MEDICINE-MAN

Each leaf should be rolled up separately, tied up with string, and hung round the child's neck. It is believed that as soon as the leaves dry the child's coughing will stop.

This prescription, given as a cure for a cough, is, so I was told by the sheikh who prescribed it, very old. Some seeds of the cotton-plant which have been dried over the fire are pounded up into a powder. The patient should take some of this dry, early in the morning and also at night.

There are a number of cures for various diseases which are well known to the people themselves, so that it is not always necessary to call in the aid of the 'doctor.' Among the large number which I have collected are the following.

Cure for a cough. A bunch of camel's hair is placed on the chest of the patient, and another bunch on the top of the head, the hair being first steeped in oil. Both bunches are kept in position by large handkerchiefs bound round the body and over the head. This is believed to make the patient perspire, after which the cough goes. This cure is used for children only.

FIG. 125. CHARM TO CURE A CHILD'S COUGH

A man who lives in a small Upper Egyptian village began, two or three years ago, to suffer from rheumatism in his legs. He got worse and worse, until he was so crippled that he was unable to walk. He consulted several doctors, so I was told, but they could do him no good. One day, when some of his friends came to see him, he told them how useless was all the medical treatment he had received. They therefore persuaded him to try the following remedy. Having made several cuts in both legs, he took some garlic and squeezed the juice of it over the cuts, rubbing it well in. The pain was awful, and the man wept from the agony. However, he persisted in the treatment every day for a fortnight. Each day a lot of pus came away—" yellow water " it was called when I was told about this remedy—and each day he got better, and the

THE FELLĀḤĪN OF UPPER EGYPT

753 pain from the rheumatism less. The incisions were made once
757 only, but the juice from the garlic was squeezed over the cuts every
978 day. At the end of a fortnight, so I was told, the man was completely cured! I fancy that the peasants believe that the rheumatism, or, at any rate, the cause of it, comes away in what they call "the yellow water."

755 Sometimes a silk thread is drawn through the skin in the region of the stomach as a cure for a pain in that organ. The skin is picked up between the finger and thumb, and a needle threaded with silk is passed through it lengthways. The silk thread is then roughly tied and left in the skin for about six days. Then it is drawn slightly to the left or right, when it is probably found to be covered with pus. A day or two after it is drawn in the opposite direction, when more pus will be removed. This process is repeated on several successive days, until all signs of pus have disappeared. There is a raised scar left when the skin has healed. Sometimes a silk thread is drawn through the outer edge of the upper part of the ear as a cure for fever, in the case both of children and grown-up people. To cure pain in the side, stomach, or back a small plain ring is inserted in the upper edge of the ear.

A person suffering from a cough takes one of the strings which form the warp of a reed mat and places one end on the top of his head, holding it there, while the other end is passed round one of his toes, or is held on the ground by his feet. The string is then
[764] placed inside the wrappings of a person who has just died, and is thus carried to the grave. The cough of the living person disappears. The same remedy is employed for fever and shivering, only a knot must then be made near one end of the string.

978 As a cure for diarrhœa some leaves from a sycamore are dried
757 in the oven, or in the sun if it is very hot. When dry the leaves are pounded into a powder, of which the patient takes two teaspoonfuls, mixed with a little sugar, every morning. It usually takes two days to effect a cure, though it may sometimes take a little longer.

As a cure for inflamed or sore eyes the dung of a black donkey (a male) is made hot in the fire, put in a piece of muslin, and then applied. This treatment must be repeated constantly, a fresh poultice being administered as soon as the first is cold, and so on till the eye is cured. After a time, according to my informant, a

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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lot of water will come from the eye, and then it will be found that all the inflammation has disappeared.

The Arabs have a custom of attempting to cure sores, headaches, and other complaints by branding with red-hot nails. A man came to me on one occasion with a terrible skin disease on his hands and wrists. An Arab had burnt him in several places across both wrists, and these burns, having become septic, had, of course, made him much worse. I dressed his hands every day till I left the village, by which time he was much better.

A similar remedy is sometimes employed for fever or for nervous disorder. A fire of cow-dung (the ordinary household fuel) is lit, and some iron nails are placed in it till they are red-hot. The patient then squats on the ground with his arms tightly folded in front, and a man holds him securely in this attitude. Another man removes a nail from the fire, and with it burns one or two places on the back of the patient's neck. The nervous trouble supposed to be cured by this means is that caused by seeing an apparition in the fields at night or by some other alarming manifestation. One is inclined to speculate on the state of the patient's nerves *after* undergoing this exceedingly painful treatment!

The following is a cure for a broken bone. Some gum is obtained from an acacia-tree, and, after being pounded and passed through a fine sieve, is mixed with water. This mixture is spread on a piece of thick brown paper, which is then placed immediately over the injured part of the body. It is left in this position for a week, when it is removed, for by that time it is believed that the broken bone will have united again.

When visiting the market on market-day at one village I saw a man seated a short distance from the crowds of buyers and sellers. On approaching him I found that children suffering from very sore and inflamed eyes were being brought to him by their mothers. On examining the eyes of a child he remarked, "Yes, he has got them," and told the mother, who was sitting on the ground in front of him, to hold the child face-downward. He then placed one hand on the back of the child's head, and with the other he gently rubbed its eyes (Fig. 126). Almost immediately numbers of tiny grubs fell from them on to the ground, where I saw them wriggling about. He did this with each child in turn, usually with the same result. I have seen him remove grubs from the eyes of children on more than one occasion, and I have never been able

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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to detect any trickery. A friend of mine told me that he had been equally puzzled. I should mention that as he rubbed the child's eyes he repeated the *Fātiḥeh*, the first chapter of the Ḳorān.

Huskiness is supposed to be cured by the following curious performance. A boy who is well known to me was suffering from extreme huskiness of the voice. His relatives, finding that he got no better, sent for one of the village butchers. The boy was made

FIG. 126. THE 'EYE-DOCTOR' REMOVING GRUBS FROM A CHILD'S EYES

to lie down on a blanket spread on the ground, and the butcher pretended to cut his throat, placing the blunt edge of the knife against it, and saying, "In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful," as he did so (Fig. 127). These words are also pronounced when an animal or even a fowl is killed for food. The relatives and friends present must be very careful not to repeat these words themselves, or the supposed cure would be useless. I saw the boy three or four days later, and remarked that he did not seem much better. His elder brother said it was because the butcher employed was too young. There was, however, a much older man who was very successful in effecting cures in this way, but he had not been available at the time.

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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Upper Egypt

THE VILLAGE MEDICINE-MAN

The village barber is employed as surgeon by the peasants for most small operations. One of his specialities is blood-letting, which is regarded as a cure for persistent headache. The barber first shaves away the hair adjacent to the forehead, upon which he then makes a series of vertical cuts, extending from temple to

FIG. 127. THE BUTCHER PRETENDING TO CUT THE BOY'S THROAT TO CURE HIM OF HUSKINESS

temple. The patient bends over a basin in which the blood is caught, and when the bleeding has continued for two or three minutes the barber sponges the forehead with cold water, till the blood ceases to flow (Fig. 128). The peasants show wonderful pluck when undergoing this operation, which must be a very painful one, but they have great faith in the efficacy of this cure. The operation is probably highly beneficial in a hot country like Egypt, as it keeps the people from getting too full-blooded.

Coptic priests are often believed, both by Christians and Muslims,

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt
Copts MR10

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Coptic priests are often believed, both by Christians and Muslims to possess the power of healing. If anyone is bitten by a mad dog a priest is called in to see the sufferer. He takes some of the hair of the mad dog, and, after rubbing the wound with spirit, places the hair on it and sets it alight. This must be done by a priest only, otherwise the person who was bitten will get hydrophobia.

F
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759

The village 'doctor' or 'surgeon' is also called upon to treat

FIG. 128. SCRAPING THE BLOOD OFF THE FOREHEAD AFTER CUTTING IT AS A CURE FOR HEADACHE

F
[957
291]

animals when necessary. If an animal has a pain in one leg, for instance, it is branded with a red-hot nail on the part that is affected. When riding through the fields one day I saw a cow that had been branded on one of its legs, the marks forming a pattern (Fig. 130). On inquiry I was told that this had been done because the cow had had a pain in that part which was branded.

F
119
123

When travelling about Egypt it is my custom to take a large basket of medicines with me, and I do my best to cure simple cases of illness. Thanks to an excellent prescription given to me by a doctor friend of mine in England I have been able to cure some really appalling cases of inflammation of the eyes (Fig. 129). The peasants react in a remarkable way to simple cures, and many a

F
[957]

[Text continued on page 216]

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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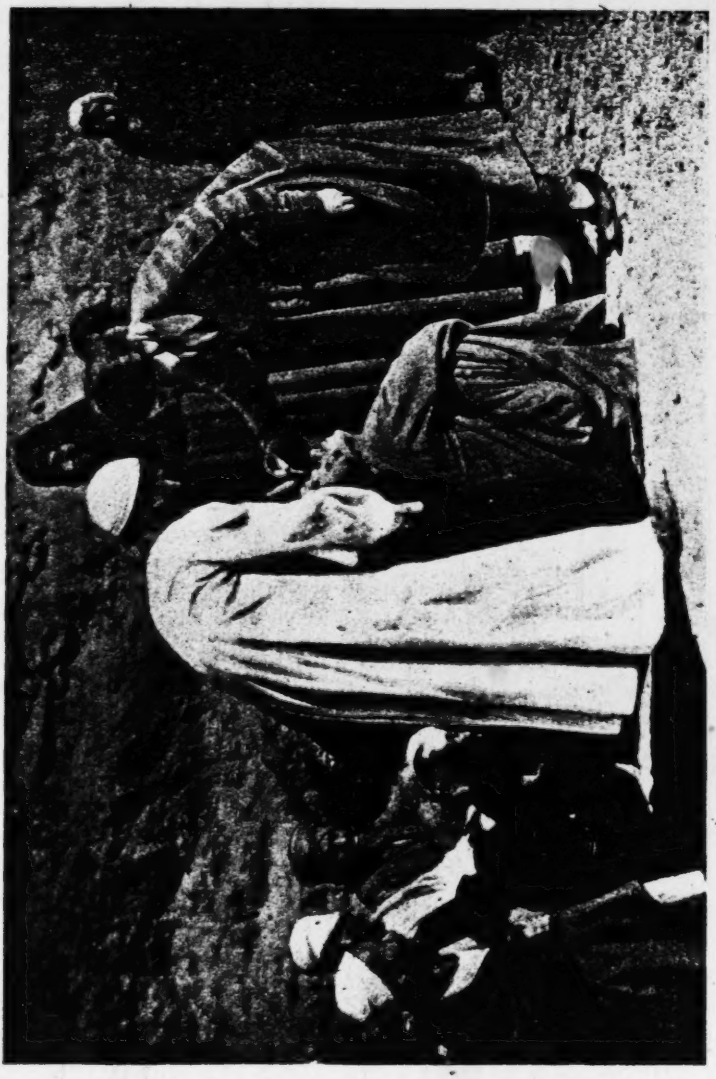

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123

FIG. 129. ATTENDING TO THE EYES OF ONE OF MY PATIENTS

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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case of bad skin disease has been alleviated by application of boracic cream! Cascara also is largely in demand, and it is no exaggeration to say that I give away hundreds of these tabloids every year. Cases of fever likewise have recovered rapidly with judiciously administered doses of aspirin or quinine. This practice of mine has earned for me the name of the Sheikheh Shifā (the Sheikheh of Healing), and it is a title which I much appreciate and

FIG. 130. COW BRANDED AS A CURE FOR PAIN IN THE LEG

value, however undeserved it may be. I have been much touched by the gratitude shown me by many of my poor patients, and in some parts of Egypt there have been occasions when I have treated over a hundred of them a day (Fig. 131). It brings me into close touch with the people, and gives me opportunities of talking to the women about keeping their children clean and impressing on them the value of soap and water. I now make it a rule never to give medicine for any child who is brought to me in a dirty state. The mother has to go home and wash it first, and then bring it to me again. I am glad to say that they nearly always return with a very much cleaner infant.

Greater facilities for providing the peasants with adequate medical treatment are urgently needed in Egypt at the present

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt
Ancient Egypt MR5
Graeco-Roman Egypt MR4

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or other amulets hung round the neck.[1] The collection of charms used by mothers to protect or cure their infants, referred to in note 1 below under the title of *Zaubersprüche für Mutter und Kind* (*Spells for Mother and Child*), dates probably from the Hyksōs period (1788–1580 B.C.); it is preserved in the Berlin Museum. The object of one of the charms in this ancient collection[2] was to protect a child from a spirit of the female sex (possibly, according to Professor Erman, a dead woman), which was trying to take it from its mother. With this idea may be compared, perhaps, the modern one that a child's falling ill is due to the mother's *ḳarīneh* wishing to draw it away from her (p. 72). The spell in question reads as follows:

FIG. 186. IRON SICKLE OF ROMAN PERIOD

After *A Guide to the Third and Fourth Egyptian Rooms in the British Museum* (London, 1904), p. 41.

> Run out, thou [fem.] that comest in the darkness, that slinkest [?] in with nose behind thee and face averted, that failest in that for which thou hast come.
>
> Hast thou come to kiss this child? I will not suffer thee to kiss him.
>
> Hast thou come to kill him? I will not suffer thee to kill him.
>
> Hast thou come to harm him? I will not suffer thee to harm him.
>
> Hast thou come to take him away? I will not suffer thee to take him from me.
>
> I have made his protection against thee with *'ſty*-herbs which make . . . [?], with onions which harm thee, with honey which is sweet for mankind and bitter for the dead, with the . . . [?] of the *ſbḏw*-fish, with the jaw-bone of the . . . [?], with the back of the perch.

My accounts of the eye-specialists on pp. 201 ff. and 211 f. may be compared with Herodotus' statement on the subject of Egyptian medicine[3]: "Each physician treats a single disorder, and no more. All places abound in physicians; some physicians are for the eyes, others for the head. . . ."

The professions of magician and physician were no less closely

[1] A. Erman and H. Ranke, *op. cit.*, p. 408; A. Erman, *Zaubersprüche für Mutter und Kind* (Berlin, 1901), pp. 30, 32, 35, etc., and *The Literature of the Ancient Egyptians*, p. 218 and note 6.

[2] A. Erman, *Zaubersprüche für Mutter und Kind*, pp. 11 f.

[3] ii, 84.

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt
Ancient Egypt MR5

associated in ancient than they are in modern Egypt, as is evident from Dr A. H. Gardiner's illuminating article, "Professional Magicians in Ancient Egypt."[1] It is interesting to note also that the two titles *swnw*, 'physician,' and *sȝw*, 'amulet-man'—*i.e.*, 'maker' or 'purveyor of amulets'—are borne more than once by the same person.[2]

The necessity for a magician's being clean (p. 186) is strongly emphasized in ancient Egyptian magical texts.[3]

The modern belief that a person can be possessed by an *'afrīt* (pp. 231 f.) or a sheikh (pp. 187, 197 ff.) finds an ancient parallel in the tale of *The Daughter of the Prince of Bakhtan and the Possessing Spirit*.[4] The peacemaking feast held by people who have appeased the possessing sheikh (pp. 186, 199 f.) is likewise parallelled in the same story, where we are told [5] that the spirit, while agreeing to leave the princess, demanded that a feast-day be celebrated with him and with the chief of Bakhtan, a demand that was carried out.

The magical ceremony described on p. 188 began with the sweeping of the ground and the sprinkling of water.[6] In ancient Egypt the priest, before beginning the toilet episodes of the temple liturgy, swept the floor of the sanctuary with a cloth.[7] As the king (the high-priest *par excellence*) is shown in a relief in the temple of Derr [8] holding a ewer as well as the cloth used for sweeping the floor, it is highly probable that the priest often sprinkled the floor as well as swept it. It was certainly the custom to sprinkle water while the floor of a house was being swept, as we learn from a wall-painting found by Professor Petrie at el-'Amarneh.[9] With regard to the lighting of a fire and the burning of a hoopoo's feathers (p. 188), it should be pointed out that the ancient magicians also burned various strange substances while pronouncing their spells.[10]

[1] *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archæology*, vol. xxxix (1917), pp. 31 ff.
[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 33.
[3] A. M. Blackman, "Purification (Egyptian)," in Hastings, *op. cit.*, vol. x, p. 482.
[4] G. Maspero, *Popular Stories of Ancient Egypt* (London, 1915), pp. 172 ff.; J. H. Breasted, *Ancient Records*, vol. iii, pp. 188 ff.
[5] J. H. Breasted, *op. cit.*, § 444.
[6] *Cf.* A. M. Blackman, "Purification (Egyptian)," in Hastings, *op. cit.*, vol. x, p. 482.
[7] A. M. Blackman, "Worship (Egyptian)," in Hastings, *op. cit.*, vol. xii, p. 778.
[8] A. M. Blackman, *The Temple of Derr* (Cairo, 1913), Pl. LXIV, left.
[9] W. M. F. Petrie, *Tell el Amarna* (London, 1894), Pl. V.
[10] F. Ll. Griffith and H. Thompson, *The Demotic Magical Papyrus of London and Leiden* (London, 1904), pp. 37 ff.

branches in use to adorn the bride's canopy and the tombs of the dead. 245

The day after his wedding the bridegroom strips a palm branch, splits it at the point and goes to touch his friends with it for good luck. To strike a man with a green palm branch brings blessing. 585 777 Palms to the fellah are like flowers, and there can be no procession or wedding or funeral without them.

The pollen of a male date-palm mixed with water is a charm against childlessness. 777 842 On the other hand, to swallow one, two, or three date-stones will prevent childbearing for as many years.

Magic and medicine are confused in the traditional use of the products of the earth to preserve or recover health. 755 757 The startling pharmacopœia of the fellaheen is to be put down partly to experience but chiefly to superstition. 278 They have taken whatever came to hand and used it : for the bowels an infusion of palm or maize leaves ; for the eyes onion juice or charred cotton ; for broken bones acacia gum ; for swellings or rheumatism bandages of hemp. The treatment clearly depends on what plants they have within reach, and the effect, in great part, on credulity.

These peasant traditions, unquestioned and irresistible, are largely superstitious. 183 Miss Blackman gives the greater part of her book (") to describing superstition in its thousand forms, 171 178 as if the whole life of the fellaheen were passed in these sub-rational affairs. Too much weight, probably is laid on fellah superstitions. They arerec orded with a certain condescension, and in spite of all that has been published on the subject there are still many gaps. However, there is no point in enriching the collection, since there is nothing original in it. Most of these customs are common to the whole of the East or to Islam. The rest, which go back beyond Christianity to ancient Egypt, are one more illustration of the changelessness which was the subject of our first chapter.

It is certain that these benumbing practices of the fellaheen are even more effective than their manner of life in isolating them and bringing about that withdrawal which 'man creates for himself by the whole structure which he founds on his own labour'. To a way of living which itself weighs him to the ground the fellah adds the burden of these ritual observances.

Another such enterprise is the holiday scheme of five young Egyptian women at Kolossona in Upper Egypt ("). "Two cousins of mine, my two sisters and myself", says one of them, whose report we are quoting, "opened our little school at the beginning of July 1933. The Government school was too far from the village and on the other side of a dangerous level-crossing. Our premises, which consist of two rooms kindly lent by a lady, are in the middle of the village.

"When the school was opened, apparatus and supplies were quite inadequate. In spite of this we set to work and took sixty children, mostly girls, between six and seventeen years of age. At first, keeping order was troublesome, but little by little things improved.

"We taught reading and writing, manual work, and games. The roll was called every morning.

"By giving prizes for regularity, we kept up attendances to 70%. The following year, when we had 170 on our books, the percentage was 80.

"We made real progress in both reading and writing, and still more in cleanliness. Sham jewellery disappeared, faces were washed every morning, and the children kept their hair clean. An anti-fly campaign was organised.

"Every day we used to put eyes, drops in the children's and children with serious trouble were sent to the oculist. On Friday, though there was no school, the children came for a health inspection, and were given a cake of soap and some hair-wash.

"We gave the boys drawing-lessons, in which we had to teach them how to distinguish colours, and the girls sewing-lessons, in which we showed them how to make dresses.

"We found difficulty at first in organising games, but it was not very long before the children began to understand and keep the rules."

This experiment lasted for three years. Unfortunately it came to an end with the departure of young women who had undertaken it.

The experience of school teachers with their pupils, and of landowners with their tenants or share-croppers, teaches them that the progress or regression of the fellah depends largely on themselves. Some make real efforts

I

THE TAḲRÎFA

THIS is common in the villages and in most of the cities. It affects the person afflicted with *ḳarfa*, which is chronic intestinal catarrh. The manner of treatment is such that it forces upon the sick person strict dieting, so that he only eats a little bread with salt and pepper after midday. In the morning he goes daily to the "old woman" who seats him before her with his lower extremities extended, while she remains behind him stretching her limbs out in the same way. Then she squeezes him with her hands against her chest, and rubs his stomach with increasing violence. After all this she squeezes his head, for the space of half an hour, with great force, the result of which is often death. She does all this without heeding or fearing evil consequences.

And would that she were satisfied with what she has now done after this manner! But now she brings a piece [p. 9] of cloth which she wraps round the neck of the patient (the dumb animal! nay, the deaf stone!) and chokes him until he loses consciousness. She thinks nothing of this, although such an "operation" often results in the death of the wretched patient. (We may seek to excuse her by saying that it is not her fault. because the rules of the "prescription" force her to do it) Next she repeats that operation many times in succession and ends up by giving the patient half a lemon dipped in a mixture of oven ashes, salt and black pepper. Sometimes the invalid has to endure this for a full month.

As for the diet, it is the best part of the medicine; but there is no merit in that due to the old woman, because she does not order it with the intention of healing the sick, but to make the rubbing of his stomach easy for herself. The extraordinary thing is that she asserts that the whole of the benefit is in the

harm, this stone rescues one from harm after one has fallen. Both in the case of a confined woman, and also of those afflicted with purulent ophthalmia, it is rubbed and its water drunk.[1] Our experience is that the harm done by the *kabbās* is greater than that done by the rest of its brethren which are strung with it on the cord of absurdities and vanities, because the harm of these is limited to their delaying the patient from calling in a doctor; but *it* is harmful on account of its rubbing upon the *maḥār* (or mother of pearl shell which is employed), as a result of which hard particles fly off which do not agree with the ailing eye, for when they are put into it the cornea becomes ulcerated. As is obvious, there is extreme danger in this.

V

TREATMENT FOR THOSE AFFLICTED WITH LEPROSY AND SYPHILIS

SELDOM do the people of the villages and the remote places treat themselves properly for the diseases which trouble them. In consequence you see among them people afflicted with leprosy, syphilis and elephantiasis. When these diseases sorely oppress them, they go off to the village of Balkamūna in the Gharbīya Province, where there is to be found a man famous in all the provinces of Lower Egypt, named Al-Ḥāgg Aḥmed. They complain to him of their pain. He immediately uncovers the patient, splits the flesh of his back and extracts from it pieces of the muscles or sinews. He then sprinkles over the wound certain powders, the best known of which is blue

[1] [This last statement requires some elucidation. The *ḥagar-al-kabbās* is a small stone which is rubbed on a mother-of-pearl shell (*maḥāra*) into which drops of water from a *ḳulla*, or earthenware jar, are let fall. This water becomes whitish after a little, and is then drunk by the patient, or in the case of eye disease, as mentioned above, it is used as an eye-lotion. Hence the injury done by the particles of the shell to the cornea. Miss W. S. Blackman in her book, *The Fellaḥin of Upper Egypt* (p. 203) mentions this "cure" and gives an interesting photographic record. She asserts, however, that it is called *ḥagar el-ṭarfā* (stone of the tamarisk). Tr.]

4:Walker E-4 (no date) 1934 MR13 Fellahin MR13
(ca. 1890)

tutty (sulphate of copper), the very thing which hastens the destruction of the patient. Do not enquire about the wealth of this quack. I have been informed on good authority that he died last year leaving 35 feddāns [or acres] of very rich and extremely fertile land [p. 17], as well as jewelry to the amount of £800 worth, in spite of the fact that a few years previously he did not possess a thread or a date stone. His practice has been inherited by his eldest son, who even to-day continues to disseminate errors and absurdities among the foolish natives.

For those who are leprous they use a recipe very well-known among the " old women " from ancient times. It is (as follows) to eat every morning for ten days the heads of scorpions, dried over the fire. Then the patient will be cured—if Allah permits it—or else he will perish at the hands of the minions of Satan the Accursed.

There is no doubt that syphilis, leprosy, and elephantiasis are among the most grievous diseases before which many physicians stand abashed. Accordingly it is necessary that those so diseased should make haste to present themselves before a skilled physician, because the drugs which may effect a cure are not easily procurable in the villages. In any case one should employ for syphilis, in the first stages, compounds of mercury ; and, in the second, iodide of potassium and other compounds. As for leprosy, the cure of it is entrusted to the future. In the case of elephantiasis there is no other way but to call in a surgeon.

VI

RĪḤ AL-MASH'ŪMĀT

THIS word is made to embrace piles and dysentery. Some people claim [p. 18] that they have been endowed with the faculty of rooting out these diseases. Such a person is a woman in the neighbourhood of Farnawī, one of the villages in the district of Shubrakhīt. When anyone suffering from relaxation

comes to her, and he has taken it into his head that he is suffering from piles, he offers her whatever money fate has bestowed on him, and she requites him with an " operation," of which the following is a description. She takes between the tips of her fingers a special preparation which she puts in the *anus* of the patient. Next she moistens her fingers with oil and puts them a second time into the *rectum* (*mustaḳīm*) until when she has succeeded in mixing the oil with the first special prepartion, she draws out her hand, which has become smeared with coagulated blood, resulting from the morbid local inflammation. As a result the wretched patient thinks that these bloody lumps are the piles, and so it is noised abroad in the mouths of the populace of that village and those adjoining it, that such a woman tears out piles by the roots, pulling them out in her hand like the liver of fowls.

Sometimes the patient finds relief for a day or two after this " operation " because, for one thing, the oil softens the local inflammation referred to above, and, for another thing, the woman by inserting her hand into the *anus* sets up an expansion of the sphincter (*'āṣira*). So the patient for these two reasons finds a slight relief from suffering. But this method is obviously fraught with injury, especially if the reader knows that the source of the dysentery is in the germs which the " doctress " carries and with which she infects the patient.

I once heard a government official say that being afflicted with piles, he was recommended to a man called the Shaikh Aḥmad al-Khaṭṭābī in [p. 19] the Khurunfish district of Cairo who was famous for the treatment of this disease. The latter treated him for three weeks, at the end of which the trouble and the pain ceased. I bethought myself of coming face to face with this man, in order to make his acquaintance and derive benefit from him. In fact, I went to him three times on three successive days and entreated him both for myself and for many of his companions, that he might enlighten me about the secret of the medicine, and take me as one of his pupils. To this he consented, but only after he had put me on my oath that I would not divulge his secret to any doctor or layman ; besides (he added) if I did reveal it to anyone, it would lose all its virtue and be useless. Thereupon he brought out a

157 paper containing some powder and said, "I make plasters of this antidote (*tiriāḳ*), and place them upon the piles; then they are cured by the permission of Allah." I took a little of it between the tips of my fingers, and on examination found it to be orpiment (*rahg*) one of the compounds of deadly caustic arsenic (*zarnīkh*) which the common people call "ratsbane" (*samm al-fār*).[1]

"We took it, reckoning it pure gold, but the blacksmith's bellows revealed the vileness of the iron."

Anyone who has the least smattering of the science of medicine knows that this element is caustic. Barely have a few days passed after using it before a man endures considerable pain, and when he recognises the source of his mistake and the consequences of his foolish belief, he is filled with remorse.

VII

SUNSTROKE (BAṬḤAT—AL-SHAMS)

153 THIS is cerebral congestion from the effect of the solar rays, and the manner of its treatment according to the method of
155 the "old wives" is, that the key of a door which faces towards the east, and is opened counter-clockwise is procured. (There must be found [p. 21] in every village at least one house fulfilling these two conditions). The "old woman" takes this key, procures woollen cords (or braces) and wraps them round the head of the patient, using the key which is in her other hand to accomplish this. In this way she keeps on bracing these cords until she can do no more. All this while the patient behaves like a bereaved woman, lamenting, and calling out, and crying for mercy, but there is none to pity. Next the "old woman" begins massaging the patient's head. I have seen her with my own eyes after all these operations, biting the skin of the patient's forehead between the eyebrows, in a fierce manner even to the effusion of blood. For she believes that the bones of the patient's head have become

[1] [Arsenic trisulphide. Tr.]

4:Walker E-4 (no date) 1934 MR13 Fellahin MR13
(ca. 1890)

Barrenness, they believe, sometimes arises also from the entering in unto the mother of a woman who has weaned her child. The " cure " in this case, according to their statement, is for the barren woman to carry a rag of wool wet with the milk of a woman who has recently weaned her child.

XXIII

THE ḲARÎNA

The Bedouins name this the " Heat " (*Ḥarāra*). This name is used generally for the class of diseases of the throat (the original symptom of which is difficulty in breathing) such as diphtheria (*khunnāḳ*) and convulsion and drying up of the uvula, and the like. The " prescriptions " of the " old wives " are self-contradictory in regard to its " cure." Some of them think that the correct thing is cauterisation [p. 49] of the child upon its frontal and terminal crown (*yāfūkh*). The child, however, finds relief from their folly, inasmuch as there is soon set up inflammation of the brain (meningitis), of which it dies.

" And he who does not die of cautery will die of something else ;
The " prescriptions " are many but the death is one."

Others again hold to the belief in replacing the cauterisation by scarifying with a razor instead, on both sides (front and back). This is the method followed by the Bedouin. The Arabs of Mariūṭ and al-Ḥāgir instead of all these, bore two holes in the child's ears through which they pass a thread of red silk. The " old wives " have different absurd theories as to the cause of this disease in children. Some of them claim that every male child has a sister (*ukht*) among the Jinn,

4:Walker · E-4 (no date) 1934 MR13 Fellahin MR13
(ca. 1890)

Many women
756 in the villages are famed for the "cure" of them. One of them is known as Sitt Umm Ḥusain. She resides in the village
757 of Ibrāhīm Aghā in the district of Shubrakhīt. Her "specific" is to take a piece of the hollow stalk of the bamboo (*ghāb Fārisī*), and split it lengthways down the middle, and place in it the skin of the patient's eyelid. In view of its flexibility it squeezes upon the eyelid and hinders its nourishment, so that it becomes violently inflamed, perhaps extending to the neighbouring parts, and destroying the eye. The result[1] of this ill-
164 omened treatment is that the part squeezed becomes affected with gangrene, the eyelid becomes separated from the eyeball, and the latter becomes exposed to all external influences, great, and small, there being now nothing to protect it from injury, not to mention that the patient through this "operation," becomes ugly and hideous, the sight of him frightening children and offending grown up people.

Many others besides Sitt Umm Ḥusain there are who go round the villages rooting out eyelids as if they thought Allah created them unintentionally.

XXVIII

HEALING OF THOSE BORN BLIND (CATARACTOUS)

757 A NATIVE of Mandūra in the Gharbīya Province claims that
278 he has done some of the things for which Jesus (on whom be peace!) was noted, and has made the blind to see (or, rather, to describe him by what results from his works, he gives those who have eyes, eyes to see). What he does is, he anoints the ophthalmic patient with *koḥl*, which he makes himself, and in ten days he is "cured."

I was informed by one of the leading people of the Buḥaira Province about some antimony [*koḥl*] which he bought from

[1] [Dr. A. F. MacCallan, writing in the *Egyptian Gazette* (April 7th, 1927) on the development of Ophthalmology in early Arabic Literature mentions this popular Fellahin "cure," and adds: "*The trichiasisentropion is occasionally cured* (by this method), *but always at the expense of a shortened upper lid, and the frequent production of lagophthalmos.*" Tr.]

this quack at a crushing price. When I examined it I found the bulk of it to be powder of ginger [*zangabīl*]. All the people of the provinces believe that these substances are exciting and burning in proportion to their usefulness. But what I say is, that the employment of ginger as *kohl* is very like the use of the powder of *Jakarītī* (?) one of the plants of Brazil. (It is violently corrosive and is used to produce artificial purulent ophthalmia).

The Moorish quacks employ in cases of ophthalmia a medicine which one of them divulged to me as a great secret, saying that it was composed as follows:

(1) One drachm of the liver of a cock with ten claws;[1]
(2) One drachm of clarified fluid from the eyes of an old hoopoe[2]; [p. 56] (3) five drachms of *shūnīz* (i.e. "*the black seed.*")[3]

Boil the whole over a slow fire, and after it becomes dry and powdery, let it be used as *kohl*; then the old hazinesses will become clear, and it will put an end to the ulcerations of the eye and cataract.

XXIX

THE INFLUENCE OF GUISES AND TITLES AND APPELLATIONS

FATE has decreed that the Egyptian should neglect his rights and rate himself lower than the Westerner with his different origin and nationality. So you see him not only being let down in the eyes of Europeans (who have some right for glorying and boasting on account of the benefits they have attained in Science and Civilisation), but also in the eyes of such

[1] [The colloquial word used is *mu'awwar*, and it is said that when such a cock enters the house and crows, an angel will appear. Tr.]
[2] [The *hudhud*, or *hidhid*, the celebrated bird in the Solomon Saga.]
[3] [This is the seed of the Fennel flower, black cummin, and is often named in the vernacular, *habbat-al-baraka*, the "seed of the blessing," because its other name, the "*black seed*" is not propitious. See the *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes, XII*, 207. Tr.]

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or from inflammation in the nerves. For that reason there are few who do not complain of it every day. As the numbers of the afflicted increase so, proportionately, do the methods of the quacks in claiming to "cure" it. One way, which I know by personal experience, is the "beating" of the temple-vein. They mean by this the "cutting" of the temple-vein [with a razor][1] because this is the place where one feels the pain more than any other. The fame of a barber in the villages depends on his skill in the "cutting" of the vein. A man, called Shurbagī, on the estate of Yūsuf Pāshā Kemāl in the district of Shubrakhīt has a monopoly of the "beating of the vein." For that reason the unfortunate from all villages make for him, pouring in to him from every quarter. He has fixed his fee for "beating the vein" at one dollar for each poor person whom this ailment has driven to him; while the rich pay according to their appearance and as they wish (for there is no way of stopping the generous). The belief in the efficacy of this "cure" for *Ṣudā'* by "cutting the temple vein" is widespread in a like degree in the small villages and large towns of Egypt. I have seen in the year [p. 62] just passed, in the Ḳaṣr al-'Ainī Hospital, more than six persons *in extremis* through loss of blood due to an "operation" of this kind, not to mention those who will have died before they could be brought in, or who fainted through heart weakness.

When the whole corporation of barbers was hostilely attacking the temple-vein, it said to them what has been said very appropriately:

"Someone else did wrong and I am tormented for your sake,
Just as if I were the forefinger of the penitent."[2]

Those who are accustomed to have recourse to cutting the vein as a "cure" for *Ṣudā'* will find in fact a temporary relief after this "operation," resulting from the dulling of sensation due to the loss of a large amount of blood by effusion; but when the blood supply returns and the patient recovers his wonted health he suffers violent pains and cruel aches once more.

[1] [For an actual photographic illustration of this "operation" see Miss Blackman, *op. cit.*, p. 214. Tr.]

[2] [When a man is sorry for some action he may bite his finger in remorse. The finger is bitten though it was not to blame. Similarly with the temple-vein. Tr.]

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One of the methods of "cure" is to draw a cross[1] on the temple of the patient with saliva. This way, if it be free from the harm of vein-cutting, is yet a bad innovation, and will not please those who love the Divine Law, because it may give place to the [p. 63] belief of foolish and simple people, instead of to truth and reality. We have even seen many fools who have tattooed[2] crosses upon their temples to guard against the evil of *Ṣudā'*.

We shall now mention by way of wonder and curiosity, not without doubt and scepticism, a method of which the success is famous in all parts of Egypt for the "cure" of this disease. It is a charm (*'azīma*) which is recited by His Excellency Mahdī Bey, Treasurer of the Public Debt, and those afflicted with headache are immediately "cured." The matter has been verified by experiments and testified to by eye-witnesses. It has been emphatically stated to me that many from the farthest parts of Egypt afflicted with this ailment used to come to the capital with this object, and would return after having obtained a perfect "cure." All I knew about the effect of the charm upon the sick, was that there was no danger in it to life. It would have been well if His Excellency had explained it and imparted it to people in whose veracity one could rely. It is indeed, His Excellency's duty towards humanity in view of the affliction of those tormented with this very oppressive ailment.

[1] [Many Moslem women wear crosses, or hang them on their children to drive away evil spirits, or *'afārīt*. At first sight it appears strange that Moslems should be found wearing the Christian emblem. But it is really a case of sympathetic magic. The evil spirits are conceived as being of Christian origin and therefore unwilling to approach anyone protected by Christian symbols. Miss Blackman, *op. cit.*, p. 65, has apparently overlooked this explanation. The old story of St. Dunstan driving away the Devil by means of a horse's shoe, the devil's own emblem is a similar case. I am indebted to Miss A. Gibson, M.A., formerly headmistress of the Scottish School for Girls in Alexandria, Egypt, for this reference. We still use horse shoes for good luck without thinking of their long folk-history. For the prophylactic value of the cross among Moslems reference may be made to F. W. Hasluck, *Christianity and Islam under the Sultans*, I. pp. 30–31. Tr.]

[2] [For examples of tattooing amongst certain Egyptian lower-class types, see article in the *Bulletin de l'Institut d'Egypte*, vol. V. (1923). Willmore, *Spoken Arabic of Egypt*, pp. 364–5 gives some tattooing superstitions. See also Dr. Fouquet: *Le tatouage médical en Égypte dans l'antiquité et à l'époque actuelle* (*Archives d'Anthropologie criminelle*), Lyon xiii, 1899, p. 270 ff. Tr.]

his having divulged the secret to me that in two days after this, the disease returned to him through imagination, just as it had left him under the same influence.

XXXII

"NECK PAIN" (WAG' AL-RAḲABA)

THIS means either hoarseness of the throat or diseases of the tonsils (lōzatēn). The "old wives" "cure" it in two ways. (1) They make the patient hang round his neck a huge bead of red stones, and (2) they order him to swallow a boiled hen's egg at one gulp without chewing. The harm of this latter method will appear from the story reported by the Egyptian newspapers of date 13th November, 1892, about a youth in the Daḳahlīya [Province] in whose throat the egg stuck and he died shortly after. Perhaps this will be a warning to those who are heedless and restrain them from trusting in the nonsense of the "old wives" and the absurdities of foolish individuals.

XXXIII

WORM EXTRACTORS (DAWWĀDA)

THESE are a community—the Ghagar and Nawar[1]—whose origin is from Syria; some say from China; and some go so far as to say that they are spread all over the world. They claim that they can "cure" children who cry too much, by extracting the worms (*dūd*) from their foreheads, pretending that this is the cause of their continual crying. Dr. Muḥammad Efendī 'Alī Duwaidār relates that a little child of his family was always crying, so the child's parents summoned

[1] [Gypsies and vagrants. See *Encyclopædia of Islam*, under, *Nūrī*. TR.]

4: Walker E-4 (no date) 1934 (ca. 1890) MR13 Fellahin MR13

the *Dawwād* ("*worm-extractor*") to "cure" him. These are his words: Whilst I was in the dwelling, this man arrived, and I wished to witness his "operation" myself, only that, before he should direct his attention to the child, according to his wont, I directed my attention to what was in his hand before the beginning of the "operation." I found in it a quantity of cheese worms. When he felt that his trickery was exposed and that he was openly disgraced, he sought safety in flight."[1]

XXXIV

WORMS IN THE EYE (DŪD AL-'AIN)

ANOTHER crowd of quacks extract worms from the eye. Most of these worm-extractors are women to whom silly creatures come complaining of cracking of the eye and heaviness of the eyelid. They have already a confused idea that the pain they feel is due to "worms in the eye," whereas in most cases it is nothing but granular ophthalmia.[2] The "operation" is as follows: The "doctress" in spite of the patient's dislike, brings a piece of sugar and, turning back the eyelid of the poor creature, rubs the inside with it, until the fleshy part becomes rubbed away and sticks to the sugar, assuming the appearance of worms.

There is no concealing the dangers of this "operation"; one being the sticking of the eyelids to the ball of the eye. Many women have lost their sight by this ineffective treatment. Perhaps the harm and injury which overtook them may be a warning and admonition to others, so that no one will consent to the absurdities of such imposters.

We counsel people not to accept the "treatment" of the Ghagar [Gypsies] nor to pay attention to their judgments and

[1] [A photographic illustration of such a "cure" will be found in Miss Blackman, *op. cit.*, p. 212. Tr.]

[2] [Trachoma, Arabice, *ramad ḥubūbī* (sic). Dr. Sharaf gives *ḥabībī*. Tr.]

4: Walker E-4 (nó date) 1934 (ca. 1890) MR13 Fellahin MR13 Libyan Bedouin MT9 EGYPT MR1

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Study and research have shown that the cases in which the "treatment" of the *Fargān* proved successful were caused by dogs that were not rabid. It happened one day that a dog bit a man who was passing by. This man went to the encampment of the *Fargān* in search of healing. They "treated" him with cautery like the others. Not many days elapsed until there appeared in him symptoms of real hydrophobia, and night and day he was heard barking shrilly, behaving like a dog in all his actions, while his teeth were gnashing in terror. In this state he continued for a space, then he died.

Whatever may be the truth or falsity of the claim made by the *Fargān*, they have only to bring their proofs and, when their assertion is substantiated, we shall be satisfied with the glory that our common people are better than the élite of Western savants. But when we consider the matter we find that such high skill in the healing art is not achieved as a favour, but by habitual toil and industry. And the physician Pasteur, whose fame has filled the two hemispheres, did not gain his immense wealth and widespread reputation, except by devoting his life to the discovery of what he achieved in the treatment of this disease (namely, hydrophobia) after its cure was (thought) impossible. The French government built for him at their own expense a special hospital to which patients go from all quarters of the inhabited world. As for Egypt we do not forget that the Khedivial Government has sent, for the past six years, five of those afflicted with hydrophobia [p. 72] to Paris to be benefited by healing at the hand of that famous physician. So if the *Fargān* are to be trusted in what they assert, why then are they niggardly in publishing the truth, and averse to the praiseworthy place in History that would be theirs on their revealing it?

Long ago, Galen said that those bitten by dogs benefited by being given daily a drachm of burned powder of river crabs, and the illness would cease after forty days.

The doctors of India use for those afflicted with hydrophobia a draught of the Indian *Ḥuḍaḍ* or *Ḥaḍaḍ*, a drachm of it upon an empty stomach for forty days, then the hydrophobia will cease. But it is not of the slightest advantage except it be accompanied by, what the *Fargān* do in our country, "ironing"

it was taken up by a society in Europe. But the truth is clear that those who thus imitated the " old wives " of Egypt were only seeking after some new and wonderful thing so that people might make a fuss about them. They were denounced by the scientific world of Europe, until they desisted from their error.

XXXVII

"THORN OF THE WIND" SHŌKAT-AL-RĪḤ

THIS is a name used generally in the villages for decay (caries) of the bones of the phalanges of the foot or hand, and the accompaniment of this decay with violent inflammation and great swelling. Many people in Buḥaira (Province) have become famous for " curing " it, the best known of them being the Shaikh 'Abd al-Ḥamīd. He has two " treatments " for this, one, old, namely, that the finger of the patient should be burnt with a circular cauterization ; the other, new, namely, that the sinews of the muscles should be cut and rooted out along with a part of the substance of the fingers. It is asserted that this latter " method " makes a more radical cure than the former because it is in agreement with modern science. The harm is not confined, however, to the cutting and rooting out of the sinews, but his recommendation to the patient not to wash his wound with water [p. 80] saying that water is " the poison of wounds."

Some people employ a poultice of doves' dung, as I saw last year, for a youth presented himself to me during my stay in the provinces, and on examination I found the nail-phalanx necrotic. So I extracted it and he was well after a few days, though he had remained for sixty days before having it out, enduring in it all kinds of torment.

4:Walker E-4 (no date) 1934 MR13 Fellahin MR13
(ca. 1890)

FOLK MEDICINE IN MODERN EGYPT

XXXVIII

SKIN DISEASES AND SNAKE-CHARMERS

164 753 755 F156 THE common people think that *impetigo* or skin-disease (*karfa*) originates from the fact that the viper blows its poison into the body. For that reason those afflicted betake themselves to the snake-charmers [Rifā'ī Dervishes] and the viper-enchanters [Sa'danī Dervishes].[1] As for the latter, they are the lowest roughs who claim that they have complete authority over serpents and vipers. So they charm by means of oil, that is, they spit into it, and anoint the patient with this oil for the space of three days. Then he is "cured." And it is [p. 81] a vain assertion and worthless belief because scientific and practical experiments prove that the poison of these reptiles does not cause harm except when it touches the blood. The savant Bouchard swallowed capsules containing large quantities of it. They were very nourishing. It is mentioned that the degree of their nourishment was like that of the white of eggs.

757 And if we see the oil of the charmers sometimes benefiting in the case of *karfa*, that is only because this disease, like some skin diseases, demands for its successful treatment extreme caution against atmospheric injuries, that is, the influence of the outside air. When oil is smeared on, the layer of smearing forms a sort of barrier between them. So no wonder the patient is cured and relieved from the fetter of the disease. For the oil in this case produces softening in the crusts of the skin-disease, then they fall off of themselves. And it is not, as the *Sa'danī* and other triflers assert that this results from their control over serpents. Because if they were speaking the truth, why do they let the serpents injure people at all, and harm mankind with their ill-doing?

[1] [See article by translator on *The Gypsies of Modern Egypt* in the *Moslem World*, July, 1933, p. 289.]

753 But these influences are the result of fear and perhaps they
152 cause other diseases of a nervous character which are feared
861 especially by the young. And since that is only the result of frightening children with the dark, and with Jinn and the bogey man[1] and other [p. 83] absurdities such as ignorant mothers tell to their children, frightening and terrifying them, the cure for the resultant ills is to eradicate the ignorance of the mothers [562] by education, a thing which is still considered a sin in the East.

XL

INCENSING (TABKHĪRA)

757 " And for Syphilis (*tashwīsh*) they ' prescribed ' incensing,
Which an " old wife " among them of the tribe of Basūs prepares.
She recites over it the [Koranic] section of *Iblīs* [=the Devil]
As if Death sent her to go to and fro.
How much money was given for its fabrication ?
How many souls have been disgusted by its fumigation ?
And does their ' incensing ' with vermilion (*zungafr*)
Cure a sick person, when there is decay in the skeleton ? "

Some of the " old wives " in the provinces were famed in past ages for their " cure " of venereal disease by " incensing." It is an ancient practice in the villages until to-day it has attained to such a degree of imagination that the villagers apply the censer (*mabkhara*) to every serious disease, be it V.D. or not.

I witnessed that myself once. An " old wife " came to " incense " a man who had been sick for a long time, and his relatives were bewildered about his disease (because they would not go to a physician) and in fact, he was suffering from [164] retention of urine due to stone. The patient died with the assistance of the " incensing " of the " doctress."

[1] [Literally, the man with (or the father of) the skinned leg (*Abū rigl maslūkha*). This bogey corresponds to our Devil on Two Sticks (= Diable Boiteu = Asmodeus, Prince of Demons). See my article in *Folk-Lore*, vol. xxxviii, 4 (Dec., 1927), p. 377. Tr.]

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The manner of it is this: The "old wife" orders the windows of the sick room to be closed first of all. Next she orders him not to eat anything but thin bread and honey during the space of ten days. On the eleventh day a large fire is kindled in the sick room [p. 84] and the "old wife" places on it her incense (which consists of pieces of sulphate of natural mercury) that is, cinnabar [*zungafr*, or sulphuret of mercury]. There goes up a thick vapour which fills the emptiness of the room. Then the "old wife" leaves her patient and goes out quickly that his punishment may be endured in solitude, since he inhales the quick poison of the fumes of the quicksilver flying about. I was informed by a trustworthy person that one patient died after two hours of the "fumigating," though, before it, he was fairly well, his illness not being dangerous or fatal. This mistake is common in all the districts of Egypt. And no matter how the "old wife's" methods or herbs may vary, they do not produce the desired effect nor any part of it, unless indeed the object of destruction. It is suitable, in the most expeditious manner, for that.

XLI

'ISHBA

As some obtain a "cure" by incense, others, both men and women, dispense with medicine by means of *'ishba* (sarsaparilla), which is too well-known to be named here, even children know it by heart, for they think that in it is a divine secret opposed to syphilis. But they are wrong, seeing that is has no use at all to-day as far as we know. Some people reckon it itself and sassafras, and guaiacum [lit. "wood of the prophets"] to be of the herbs causing sweat, but in my opinion, tea is better than any of them.

It is quite certain that the bulk of the *fellāḥīn* in these days know the truth of what we have said, because of its inefficacy, and that they have turned aside from it. Nowadays they know

another thing; you will see them coming to the cities and asking in hospitals or pharmacies for it [p. 85] by the name of *yadūr*, meaning potassium iodide. Yes, they are right as to its being beneficial, but not in all attacks of syphilis, seeing that it is proved that it is not the least use in the first two attacks. (And in particular they do not know syphilis from anything else, for they are ignorant of the diagnosis of the disease and consequently miss the cure.)

We have previously hinted at a remedy for syphilis. But in general there is no escape from consulting a physician. The patient who fears for his family, or the family who fear for him, should hasten to get away from the disease, since it is contagious.

XLII

"MIXING" (MADHAḲ)

Madhaḳ literally means "mixing."[1]

(And in truth they are *mixed* when they err in its treatment.) It is [a name] applied in the villages to a kind of muscular swelling (or rheumatism) which strikes the muscle under the shoulder-blade, and the muscle below the spine sometimes. And they "prescribe" for him who is smitten with it, that he should lean against the door of a room facing the East, with his feet above and his head below, and meeting the ground with his palms so that the weight of his body will be upon them. And he must have filled his mouth with water, and must remain in this position about ten minutes at least, until he becomes giddy (from congestion of the brain) and throws himself to the ground. The harm of this "method" is obvious and useless [p. 86] except to make those who do it like monkeys. Perhaps the patient overturns on to his back or falls upon his *pia mater* [*Arabice* (أم الرأس) "*mother of the head*"], and there receives the reward of his act, or the result of his folly and his inability to imitate others.

[1] [This "mixing" or ambiguity cannot be translated.]

4: Walker E-4 (no date) 1936 MR13 Fellahin MR13
(ca. 1890)

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XLIII

THE HORN OF THE RHINOCEROS AND POISONS

ALL internal diseases for which the "old wife" is not enabled to perfect a trick to impose on the intellects of the people of the provinces, she attributes in her diagnosis to *Sukwa* [see below]. She says to the patient: "Oh, my son, you have *Sukwa* and nothing will be of any avail except the horn of the rhinoceros, which must be placed in a china vessel and exposed to the dew all night and drunk upon an empty stomach in the morning."

Now the "horn of the rhinoceros" (*ḳarn al-ḫartīt*) consists of pieces of the horns of cows or of buffaloes. Pilgrims or merchants from the Sudan bring them and spin the tale how that they are the antidote (*tiriāḳ*) for poisons. Whereas even if they were rhinoceros horns, as they assert, there are no special beneficial qualities in them at all, as far as we know. But it is well known that the volatile salts of the English are extracted from the horns of the hart, or [p. 87] mountain buck, but that is not the rhinoceros. Whereas if we imagined, as they do, that these two are one and the same, they would not have brought a conclusive proof, since on their putting the horn in water the salt in it does not melt so as to be of benefit. But what we do know is that the volatile salts of the English are no good in counteracting poisons (except alcoholic poisoning or intoxication).

It is well-known that the word *Sukwa* is applied generally to pulmonary consumption accompanied by loss of blood on coughing. The patient must be well-fed, and guarded as much as possible from cold. He must leave the place where he caught it for dry warm places, and keep away from crowds and not neglect moderate exercise. And let his people guard against allowing him to spit upon articles or on the ground. (For if they knew that the poison that the "old wife" shuns is expectorated with the saliva, and that healthy people breathe it and fall into the clutches of Death, they would beware of the evil consequences. So let them know that it is one of the most

164 755 753 violent of contagious diseases and the hardest to cure). Therefore let them have him spit into a handkerchief or a piece of linen, which is then dipped in tar and afterwards burned.

His relatives should call in a doctor to visit him. It is well known that menfolk do not reckon themselves ill unless they are confined to their rooms and unable to stir out of doors, that is, when the illness has become chronic and incurable. Whereas if it had been receiving attention it would not have been thus, except after a very long time, and at the beginning it would have been possible to repel it with ease. Frequently we have seen people suffering from pulmonary consumption, and in spite of that [p. 88] the answer of one of them to us when we asked him about his disease, was: "Allah forbid, I am not diseased." But before long we see the disease contradicting him, and he is confined to his house. And most of them are fated to die of these diseases for this reason.

757 744 It is encumbent on those who are consumptive to attend to the disease at the outset. But I fancy them saying, "And where can we find a doctor to consult every time; the cities are distant, and perhaps we go to consult a doctor and can't find him." I say, it is an easy matter. If the people of the villages desire to have a special doctor for themselves to cure them gratis, without their going to him, and to be at their command, they have only to take the trouble to ask him from the Government on condition that each one of them pays one millième per month (as His Excellency 'Alī Mubārak Pāshā reckoned) and as we demonstrated more than once in the well-known newspaper *al-Mu'ayyad*.[1]

XLIV

PAIN OF THE SHIḲḲA

164 755 759 THIS is generally applied to diseases of the spinal marrow and colic of the stomach and kidneys. They "prescribe" for the sick that two men should carry him by the head and feet

[1] [See Hartmann: *op. cit. index.*]

4: Walker E-4 (no date) 1934 (ca. 1890) MR13 Fellahin MR13

and place him on the back of a she-ass having its feet tied, so that the back of the sick should coincide with the back of the ass, and one of the " doctors " beats her while the other holds the head of the patient. Then the she-ass jumps violently. It is said that there is mighty healing in her. One of the " sagacious ones " enlarged upon the success of it in his case once. When I asked him concerning the diagnosis of his disease at that time, I knew that a kidney-stone had stopped in his *Ḥālib* [p. 89] (i.e. the canal that conducts the urine from the kidneys into the urinary bladder) so the leaping of the ass helped its rolling and slipping.

But the leaping of the ass is no use in colic of the stomach or of the colon, or inflammation of the spinal marrow.

XLV

TONICS FOR THE VENEREAL FACULTY

THE seeds which are matrimonial tonics and incitements to coition and whose secrets they spread abroad in cities, and which many simpletons and rich people who pay their prices at recognized rates, rush to purchase from them, are all aids to the destruction of health, hastening on ruin. They are not of the least use for the object aimed at by these foolish people, nay, the result is the opposite of that, as those, who serve Science by experience assert (in spite of their being deceived at first by errors). And we do not know that true Materia Medica mentions drugs which prolong the time of propagation or strengthen the venereal faculty, unless some false opinions of certain Westerners which are considered like the opinions of " quacks " in our country.

They have said that the injection of a solution of the testicles of a fox and the Indian pig is advantageous, but experience contradicts this.

[p. 91.] And they may believe that the dye of Spanish flies[1]

[1] [*lit.* Indian flies.]

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XLVII

MUFATTÁḲA[1]

THE "old wives" make this out of a collection of materials whose number to their statement, reaches forty kinds, the bulk of it of oily fruits. The fat of black beetles is reported to be necessary to the completion of its ingredients. It appears from its composition that it is hard to digest and of an injurious nature. It causes turbidness of digestion and diarrhœa. So it is more harmful than the "bead" of the cow [see above]. But the "old wives" have other compounds besides this, such as "the Seven grains" (سبع حبوب) [see illustration in Miss Blackman, op. cit. p. 79] and "orange jelly" (سحوق النارنج).

XLVIII

ECZEMA (ṢAFRA)

THIS is a name used generally in the provinces for many skin diseases which are a sort of eczema (*Ḳūb*), and especially for the disease called psoriasis. (I mean the "pearly" variety, because it has scabs shining like mother of pearl). Those afflicted with this disease go to Shaikh Farag Abū Maḥmūd of Munāshela in the district of Shubrakhīt in the Province of Buḥaira. He cauterizes them upon the metatarsus of their feet opposite the tops of the three last toes, and orders them not to go near water for forty days. The strange thing is that this condition does not suit the Fellāḥ whose food comes from sowing [p. 93] especially while he is barefooted. Then how should he not be wet when he is continually immersed?

[1] [This is a kind of sweetmeat or *ḥalāwa*, made of molasses. I had the opportunity given me of tasting it once. If its dark oily appearance does not repel, its taste does. I can understand now after seeing its colour why the rumour goes that it is made from the flesh of black beetles, as the author states. Tr.]

4:Walker E-4 (no date) 1934 MR13 Fellahin MR13
(ca. 1890)

Only, if the disease be concealed some days of the year, as happens in the winter season usually, the " physician " goes off boasting of his cure, charging the patients to take care still more, imposing upon them many hard conditions, so that he has a thousand excuses when the disease reappears.

XLIX

ENVY (ḤASAD)

" When the envier casts his evil eye,
Bring fire and *ṣhabb*, together with *fāsūkh* and *jāwī*,[1]
And if the Beldame of the tribe is present,
She will say: 'Incensing is most beneficial in curing.'"

Doctors have tried to account for envy, and their latest explanation is that it is due to the electric magnetism which exists in varying quantity in all things. In inorganic bodies it is the gravitational force, in plants it is the life principle. In human beings this electricity is found in a power which differs in quantity and quality. The former is known; the latter, on the other hand, is of two kinds, either beneficial or pernicious.

When the former kind is found in a person it makes him well disposed in wordly affairs. You see him attracting favours, either by his appearance or by the elegance of his address, or the beauty of his manners in society. On account of this, love of appearance is engendered, or enthusiasm for the discourse of a speaker, and there is destined for its owner the approval of men according to his business, or trade, or manner of life. But when the latter kind is found in a person it makes him become artful in subjects of evil report. You see him either a thief or a practicer of the lowest crafts, or addicted to covetousness and vengeance, if it is in his power to do so. And by means of whatever amount of this evil

[1] [These substances are explained *infra*. Tr.]

4: Walker E-4 (no date) 1934 (ca. 1890) MR13 Fellahin MR13 Middle East-Arabic Period-M3 Egypt MR1

demolished the religion of his people, and affirmed that religions were false. He was busily engaged in the other parts of his life with the particularities of names, and magic and astrology and the alchemy of gold. I mean by him the famous Voltaire. So why do we ignore these and say: "We Easterners were, and do not cease to be, in a manifest error?" In general we find in Egypt many worthless persons, who have no work, addicted to the worship of some leaves which they deem to be treasures of great value (but their value is but madness, if they only knew it). You see them bringing numerous substances to produce the concoction, and keep on kindling fires under it until it all flies off in smoke. Then, when they do not find anything except a little dust inside the crucible, they think that they have made a mistake, so they begin the work again and again, and so on till their cash is lost, and their lives are like scattered dust. And while their money is coming to an end they are pouncing upon the ignorant with their imbecility, and they waste the remainder of their substance as the Treasure Diviners [see above] have done. This evil is found in cities more than in villages. I know many of the well-known families in Cairo, whose wealth was brought to an end through "the extraction of gold."

LIII

DECEIT UNDER THE NAME OF CIVILIZATION

[p. 104.] We now come to the laxity and forgery that are blended with the medicine of to-day, and what makes it fanciful or seemingly so, just as we mentioned the description of the men and women of the Past. Therefore, we say that there is no doubt that the sciences have advanced to-day since yesterday. Let us leave aside the distant past to be judged by the future. We do not know in which of the two science advanced more. A great number of intelligent people hold the opinion that time was when the sciences were more advanced than to-day.

The truth is that most of the works of mankind to-day

4:Walker E-4 (no date) 1934 (ca. 1890) MR13 Fellahin MR13 Egypt MRI

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proclaim that those holding this opinion are right without a mistake. Those who consider the doctors of the present generation, whose opnions clash and whose views disagree and whose drugs differ, are bewildered and know not which of them is right and which of them is mistaken. The person who considers the book which is printed in all languages as a commentary on the Elixir of Judenau (?) (جودنو) and sees that it cures all incurable illnesses in a short space, and who uses the "cure" for years and does not obtain the slightest advantage, becomes in his distress enraged against physic and physicians. Every invalid who turns the pages of this bulky book repeats what is vritten, viz., "By the use of six glasses of this Elixir the invalid will be cured of pulmonary consumption." Afterwards his glance falls upon an article as follows: "The Journal *France Moderne* reports: 'All the medical sciences acknowledge that this Elixir cures all heart diseases, meningitic inflammation, and diseases of the arteries and decay of the bones' to which it adds a rider: 'It prolongs life when used in a suitable way.' (The patient) has recourse to this elixir which he does not cease to use [p. 105] while the malady increases in strength, and its course is swift, until he dies a natural death, and then he learns the truth that these statements are false.

We were astonished at the person who came to Egypt during the past year and began announcing in the public streets to the effect that the medicine of "*Sīkwā*" (سيكوا) was the only cure for deafness, blindness, rickets, consumption, piles, and all incurable illnesses. It is obvious to anyone watching that person seated in a carriage embellished with gold, adorned with mirrors, drawn by a pair of fleet horses and surrounded by a band of musicians, while he himself is proclaiming that the famous *Sīkwā* is leaving Egypt on the morrow, that Galen was risen from the grave, and that this was a suitable chance of gaining possession of his remedy.

Doubtless intelligent people were not deceived by the like of these profitless manifestations. But the strangest of them is what we see printed in the columns of our local journals under the name *Salwar* (or *Salūr*) (سلور), whose beneficial pills are well known as a "cure" for many illnesses.

4: Walker E-4 (no date) 1934 (ca. 1890) MR13 Fellahin MR13 Egypt MR1

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But the chief marvel of his shrewdness was when he heard about the belief of the Egyptians in empirics, and sent them pills to cure them, and began proposing to them things which, if they abstained from them, would alone be sufficient to restore their health. He prescribes bathing in cold water every morning and abstaining completely from drinking or smoking as well as the eating of food half cooked, although if every sick person considered these things he would not need the "cure" of "His Excellency the Servant of Humanity." Those who know science, or who study medicine, wonder exceedingly at the ignorance of teachers and authors who assert: "They (i.e. the doctors) are unable to cure many diseases. They submit to the judgment of their inability to overcome diseases when the *Elixir of* [p. 106] *Judenau* and the drink of *Sīkwā* and the pills of *Salwar* cure all."

You also see European Pharmacies, especially, and drug-stores, filled with compounds prepared in Europe—"specialities"—for "curing" those sick of such and such an infirmity after so many days' use. If they were genuine then what would be the advantage to invalids in crying out for doctors to pursue medical research? All they would have to do would be to resort to these compounds and dispense with all else.

The patient with any chest trouble, for example, would simply use *Īrīz Pills* (حبوب ايريز) which, they say, cure all chest disorders.

The patient troubled with V.D., for example, would resort to the *Drink Jībīr* (جبير). It is said to stop all turns, in spite of their different character.

Now are these people really serving mankind by means of their remedies, or are these matters quite devoid of truth, or are they intended for another purpose?

In fact, they are only the errors of swindlers or the snares of those to whom we can commonly apply the name of lawful thieves, a clique who appear in the midst of the throng and the struggle for life and are reduced in spite of themselves to obtaining riches and wealth from any source, provided there is no law to restrain them and no one to prevent them. This is the rule of the new civilization and the modern manner of life.

PART TWO[1]

[The author's rather laboured introductory remarks may be briefly summarized thus. The printing of Part Two was slightly delayed for two years (from 1892–4). In the meanwhile he received enquiries concerning the work from all sides, especially from orientalists and anthropologists. In this way he was encouraged to publish what follows.]

I

THE SHABSHABA AND "MILKING OF THE STARS"

THE strongest "cure" and most successful drug tried among women to restrain their husbands from flirting with other women and keeping them to themselves, is the *Shabshaba*, and the "*milking of the stars*" (*ḥalb al-nugūm*) comes near it. They are almost alike so that in the course of time their two charms have become confused. (Sometimes they are employed for the "cure" of some of the nervous diseases which the common people assert to be due to the Jinn). The *Shabshaba* is very rare in Egypt. Only certain well-known old wives know its real nature. The most famous of these is the Shaikha Khadra al-Aṣwānīya al-Ṣūfīya. She was until 1309 [= 1891] living in a cell at the foot of the [p. 4] Muḳaṭṭam Hills (Cairo) near the tomb of Sīdī 'Umar ibn al-Fāriḍ. [The famous mystical poet (1181–1235). Tr.]. I believe her name is not absent from the memory of those ladies who knew her and verified the success of her "method" and who used to throng to her.

[1] [Printed in the name of the Tenth International Congress of Orientalists held at Geneva, September, 1894.]

4:Walker E-4 (no date) 1934 MR13 Fellahin MR13
(ca. 1890)

in their phantasies " helpers " (*A'wān*) and spirits (*Jinn*), and they picture mighty happenings which were accomplished at the hands of spirits [p. 11] by those incantations and names, during the absence of their reason in the smoke of *ḥashīsh*; just as the *Shaikha Khadra* and her colleagues used *ḥashīsh* in incensing only to stupefy the " remnant " of reason in the woman whom the devils of slander and defamation have deceived. Thus there appears to her eyes, what eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor the reason of any rational being verified.

II

THE KAMARA,[1] OR OPHTHALMIC HOSPITALS IN THE VILLAGES

ALLAH Most High created no land whose people needed to take more care of their eyes than our own land of Egypt, on account of its inhabitants being so subject to dangerous ophthalmia. But He decreed upon the land in past times the lack of many doctors, who are the mainstay of health. Thus the sick, including those suffering from eye-disease, were compelled to appeal to quacks among the ignorant people. With the passage of time the decree of custom became fixed in the minds of the people up to the present time, when medicine has so obviously progressed. Yet we still see great crowds visiting these false physicians to be cured, on the outbreak of diseases. But they only add to their danger and place heavy stumbling blocks [p. 12] in front of the doctor on the day when their " cure " ends in failure, and the patient comes to the cities to be cured of his illness.

In the Gharbiya district there is a woman in a village named *Minyat Ganāḥ*, who has made her house an ophthalmic hospital. Ignorant women seek her out from every quarter, in connection with their different eye-troubles. She has one method to

[1] [It is named in some provinces the *Shifa*.]

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"cure" all, namely, to segregate them for forty-one days in a room darkened and tightly locked, without feeding them during their stay there except with thin bread and molasses (lit. black honey). This woman comes to visit them every morning only, and performs on them the "cure" by a wonderful system. If any of them experiences a violent pain she makes for her a ring or two for her temple or her neck, or else she cauterizes her with iron rings in the foregoing places.

Women come to her to be "treated" for complete "adhesive" obscurations, or retinal inflammation, or atrophy of the visual nerve, or any other of the grievous diseases all of which the woman (quack) characterizes by the name of "blindness." She begins by administering to them a drop of the juice of an onion for one week. In the second week she makes for them a collyrium of ginger (of equal parts of sugar-candy and ginger). [p. 13.] In the remaining three weeks she drops in their eyes a drop composed of dew which has fallen overnight upon the leaves of the Persian cane (or bamboo), mixed with the powder of burnt bones of crows.

In the Gharbîya province, in a village called *Kafr Khidr*, about a quarter of an hour distant from *Ṭanṭā*, there is a man who lays claim to a medicine for the eyes. He has harmed thousands of God's creatures, because his "method" is quicker in damaging than the previous one. He is prone to make surgical operations on all who seek him out, whatever the disease may be. One of my medical friends told me (as follows): I visited the man one day when he had just begun to perform an operation. He split the cornea with a broad knife, and all the moistures of the eye flowed out, and in a word, there were cast out with them the iris and the internal covers. The man, however, did not become confused, but bound up the eye of the patient, and said to him, "Now you will go home and sleep upon your back without moving in the least or speaking a word during three days. If you do not do that then I am not responsible for your eye, if anything happens to it." My friend said, I was sorry for this poor fellow, but I checked myself, and said that it was not necessary to grieve for the loss of sight when Allah has blinded insight.

4:Walker E-4 (no date) 1934 MR13 Fellahin MR13
(ca. 1890)

FOLK MEDICINE IN MODERN EGYPT

III

RHEUMATISM AND DONKEY MARROW

One of the ancient "prescriptions" successfully used for *Ḥidār* of the joints (i.e. rheumatism) is taking the marrow from the feet of a dead donkey and rubbing it on the part affected for seven days. They go to extremes in the matter until the patient is compelled to bring it from remote regions, after his family have set spies and observers in all the villages to inform them of the death of a donkey, male or female. Sometimes they employ the fat of a camel or serpent.

The true explanation. It is possible that in the spinal substance of the donkey's bone there may be a soothing element, which the learned have not yet discovered. But it is very improbable that there is an element counteracting or removing inflammation, since a patient told me that that marrow is not exciting or burning, but that it is like ordinary fat. Perhaps it may here have some effect on muscular rheumatism, but in [p. 15] the case of rheumatism of the joints it is of little use.

IV

THE UNIQUE ELEMENT (AL-GŌHAR AL-FARD)

Those who go back to what we wrote in the first part (page 24) concerning piles and dysentery (*rīḥ al-mash'ūmāt*) will know the secret of those fancies in the villages. But today the crowds of quacks are not satisfied with propagating their errors in the villages, but they go so far as to publish the same in the newspapers. I read in an Arabic newspaper an advertisement by a man called Abū 'Ujaiza of the village of Fisha, residing in the dwelling of Khawāja Khalīl Kamāl in Ṭanṭā. He "cures" piles in the space of three days, at least,

so he says. May Allah forgive him, or Khawāja Khalīl Kamāl his dupe, for publishing his "craft," as we have heard that he agreed with him to divide the profits. By my life, if he were able to cure them in the space of three days he would enrich the world, not only in Egypt but in Europe and America. Then it would be fitting to name this medicine of his "The Unique Element," but [p. 16] we do not think his medicine differs from that of Shaikh Aḥmad Al-Khaṭṭābī (May Allah pity him!). At least it does not surpass the astringents and sedatives which have an effect on these hæmorrhoidal tumours, nor does it ease their pain or reduce their size.

But what shall we say to Abū 'Ujaiza, who proclaims in the newspapers—assisted by the liberty given to science to advertise without opposition—that his medicament "cures" piles in three days? We consider nothing more fitting than the arrest of such a man so that he may either prove his veracity and be rewarded, or else show his mendacity and receive his deserts.

V

THE CHARM FOR THE ENVIED

In all successful occasions of "Envy"—compare Part I page 78—the "old wife" is called on to use the *Rakwa* (or charm), but not every "old wife" is able to do so. Only some of them, among those skilled in the art of "doctoring" can do so. When she comes she orders alum (?)[1] and *fasūkh*, both of which are thrown upon a blazing fire. Then she places the incense with her hand on the head of the patient ("the Envied One") and says:

"The first in the name of Allah; the second in the name of Allah; the third [p. 17] in the name of Allah; the fourth in the name of Allah; the fifth in the name of Allah; the sixth in the name of Allah; the seventh, there is no power or strength

[1] [The Arabic text has *shabak*, which seems a mistake for *Shabb*. Tr.]

4:Walker E-4 (no date) 1934 MR13 Fellahin MR13
(ca. 1890)

old " method " which is only of advantage to its practitioner, who lives comfortably in the shadow of its effect on the minds of simpletons.

X

THE " CURE " FOR ULCERS

The " old wife " prescribes for the patients who are suffering from chronic ulcers (*nawāṣīr*) having fetid purulent secretions, the following " prescription " : Mix one part of snuff (or tobacco dust) with one part of natron (its usual name [p. 22] is *atrūn*, and it is sesquicarbonate of soda). Pour on them two parts of very pure olive-oil and boil the whole for a while. Then anoint the tube of the ulcer (*nāṣūr*) and it will be cured.

Some excellent people have attested to me that it is a " cure " that has been proved by actual observation to be advantageous. It may be that time will show the truth of this experiment and beneficial remedy. But it is well known to-day that there is no cure for ulcers except scraping them with special instruments, or erasing the ulcerous tube, thus removing the cause, and sewing up the new wound. Sometimes cautery with a heated probe, or an electric cauterizer is employed.

Explanation of the " prescription." The snuff is a cauterizer, and on its entering the wounds it awakens their vitality, which has been weakened by the passage of time, and it changes the nature of the vile secretions for the better. Then fleshy pieces grow up filling the cavity of the ulcerous tube. (But that only results on the supposition that an ulcer is found continuing after the removal of its cause, such as ulcers resulting from a bullet which has entered a muscle deeply, and remains for some time with the surrounding part suppurating. Then it is extracted and the road leading to its original lodging-place has the appearance of [p. 23] an ulcerous tube. But appearances are not evidence).

4: Walker E-4 (no date) 1934 (ca. 1890) MR13 Fellahin MR13 Egypt MR1

F 164 F 757

bone and the eye-lids were swollen and distended, and the eye-ball wound was violently inflamed, veiling the cornea. When I asked him the reasons for the ailment he hesitated somewhat in answering, so I repeated the question and he answered as follows: "There was a cataract in my eye so I went to such and such a doctor." (He mentioned a Greek who used to live in a small tavern in the neighbourhood of the new vegetable market, who claimed a knowledge of medicine for the eyes. The date was Ramaḍān, 1311 = 1893). "He placed ammonia in my eye, and said that after three times it would eat away the granular lids (*laḥmīya*) from the eye, and lo, I am as you see!"

So I subjected him to the treatment counteracting inflammation by means of suitable drops until these ailments were removed. And I declare that if that man had delayed and had not hastened of his own accord to a qualified doctor, his eye would have become a prey to the voracity of the ammonia.

XIV

MĀNASTIR[1] AND WOMEN

E F 278 759

I WAS one day sitting in the shop of one of the druggists in the *wikāla* of *Abū Zaid* in Cairo, when there came to him an old woman, and asked him if he had any *mansir* (sic). So I interrupted by asking her what benefit it had. (This was after I knew that she meant *mānastir*). She said: My son, this is of benefit to women whose bodies are weak because of sleeplessness and disease or irritation. When "the bead of the cow" [see page 76] and *ḳirtās* and *mufattaḳa* [see page 77] are of no avail there is brought to her *mansir* to the weight of an oke.[2] (She means that the weight of the *mānistir* creates in the woman who takes it, fat to the amount of an oke.)

[1] [See above, p. 96.]

[2] [*Ūḳḳa* or *uḳḳa*, the Turkish pound in general use in Egypt, and usually termed *oke* by Europeans. It is equivalent to 2¾ lb. Tr.]

E [804]

4:Walker E-4 (no date) 1934 (ca. 1890) MR13 Fellahin MR13 Egypt MR1

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After the man had answered her request and she had gone away, I thought about that "remedy," but I did not find it in any way resembling *mānastir*, except that both of them are from inside the testicle (*hiṣya*) of an animal. I was astonished at that. The druggist said to me that in the past this article was asked in connection with this and similar "prescriptions," e.g. as a tonic for coition, and for use in pregnancy, etc. He had men in India searching for it. But to-day the new medicine has nullified these things, and traces remain [p. 29] only on the tongues of "old wives." The laboratory of G——— and F——— and D———[1] has made it easy for us to find this article, however, at a low price since it is imported from Europe. These are the results of the progress of industry. How marvellous it is of Science to abolish it at first in its capacity as a natural product, and then find it (or something counterfeiting it) by way of industry!

The true explanation. It is not possible to ascribe *mānastir* to the testicles of an animal unless we consider as true the theory of the Elixir of Judenau (cf. Part I, p. 88 ff) or the bringing back of youth, after old age has come, by means of the testicles of the Indian pig.

I have witnessed the injection of this quintessence during the days when I was in the Ḳaṣr al-'Ainī Hospital. Our Professor, Doctor Ḥasan Pāshā Maḥmūd administered it to an old man called Mūsā, the Shaikh of the village of Ṭurāna in the Province of Buḥaira, who was afflicted with the nervous trembling of old age. But he did not change anything of the state of the patient.

XV

CORNS

F 164 T57

Corns [lit. "Eyes of fish"] named "nails" (*misāmīr*) are one of the ailments [p. 30] of civilisation, or the excess of women

[1] [Here he mentions the names of certain well-known Cairo druggists in the European quarter. Tr.]

4: Walker E-4 (no date) 1934 (ca. 1890) MR13 Fellahin MR13 EGYPT MR1

imitating each other. Because corns result from the pressure of tight shoes upon the toes. They "cure" it by placing a piece of tomato upon it, and leaving it for three hours. Then it ceases.

XVI

IN THE VICINITY OF THE BĀB ZUWAILA[1]

In front of the Bāb Zuwaila, named the Bāb al-Mutawallī, there is a man who sells *kunāfa*[2] too renowned to be forgotten by the consumers of this article. My Professor, Muḥammad Bey Durrī told me about him that he "cures" all kinds of eczema (*ḳūba*) and especially what particularizes the varieties of *karfa* (see p. 68). He had, he told me, a little maid-servant afflicted with this ailment. He directed her to the proper treatment, but an "old wife" took her off with her to that man without his knowledge. The result was good, for she was "cured."

The true explanation. This man employs certain ointments doubly compounded, and since their success is assured he does not abandon the means by enquiring too closely concerning it. We are aware that crowds in the provinces are renowned for this and are called *Ḥāwīyīn* (or snake-charmers) since they recite certain words over a glass containing olive-oil and the yolk of an egg and spit into it. And here is the importance of the slimy mixture composed [p. 32] of the two substances above-mentioned, since by it the effect of outside influences is prevented.

Near to that in effect is the juice exuding from the sycamore (which is called "the milk of the sycamore," *leben al-gummaiz*). It is famous among the *fellāḥīn* for the "cure" of different kinds of skin-diseases.

[1] [One of the famous old city-gates of Cairo, also called the *Bāb al-Mutawalli* because a very holy Shaikh of that name is supposed to appear there sometimes. Numerous relics of hair, rags and teeth are suspended from its nails by the superstitious folk who hope for a "cure" or a blessing thereby. Tr.]

[2] [i.e. sweet vermicelli. Tr.]

4:Walker E-4 (no date) 1934 MR13 Fellahin MR13
(ca. 1890)

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XVII

"WINKING" (ṬARFA)

164 SLIGHT shocks falling upon the eye-ball cause irritation which often leads to a dangerous state on most occasions. All such afflictions arising from an external influence are named ● 757 by the common people *Ṭarfa*. They have sundry "cures" for it. One of these is effective for the time being. It consists of closing the eyelid and placing the hand outspread above it. Then another person puts his mouth to this hand and blows upon it with his foul breath, deep breaths one after the other. [918] Shortly after we see them ordering the milk of a woman to be brought and a drop placed in the eye. Then it is "cured."

The true explanation. As for the blowing upon the eye, it is of little account, since it has no real influence upon it. But milk has been used since ancient times for placing [p. 33] in the eye for all light irritations which occur therein. It is very good. Many *koḥl* manufacturers still order it even to-day.

The true treatment. The handiest and simplest thing for the patient is to boil a little Greek camomile [*bābūnig Rūmī*] (or "the chickens of 'Ali's mother") and throw into that hot mixture a piece of tissue, which he places at once upon his eye for the space of a quarter of an hour for two hours. Remove all customary eye-salves. There is no harm in using human or animal milk, since it mollifies the inflamed condition. But if the eye is in a serious state, then the first thing is to hasten to an oculist.

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XVIII

A "CURE" FOR ITCH (GARAB)

ITCH is common among children in the elementary schools in the villages on account of the meeting there of the many conditions which help its development, such as dirtiness, moisture and carelessness. They "cure" it in the beginning by breakfasting every morning on a piece of "camel-driver's sulphur"—(Thus it is known among them. It is natural sulphide)—inside the yolk of an egg. If that is not successful there is the final "cure." The poor child is taken to the sewer of the village mosque [p. 34] and his body besmeared with those putrid substances, which they leave upon him for two complete days. Some of the Shaikhs of the villages exceed the bounds in the efficacy of this "cure." I have seen companies of them leading their boys to the sewer of Sīdī Ibrāhīm al-Dasūḳī at the time of the *Maulid* [or Birthday Festival] to perform with them there. This method is harmful and a hindrance to a real cure.

The true explanation. Nobody denies that compounds of sulphur are beneficial in the curing of all diseases that are named parasitic. But in spite of that there is no escape from observing cleanliness. Treatment by "camel-driver's sulphur" is good—(the sewer method, of course, is a quite different matter)—because the sedimentary substances contained in sulphurous substances touch the affected skin as agents and act strongly. So would that people smeared the body of the child with sulphur instead of with those filthy substances!

XIX

THE "CURE" FOR BALDNESS

THOSE exposed to being smitten by it in the villages are also the children of the elementary schools, because, like the

4:Walker E-4 (no date) 1934 MR13 Fellahin MR13
(ca. 1890)

preceding, it is an infectious parasitic disease, and found in very hideous forms. Through neglect of it, and failure to attend to it at the beginning, it baffles physicians and becomes a danger.

The thoughts of the "old wives" are perplexed regarding its "cure." Some of them order anointing with petrol; others order tar and other substances. All are profitless. The famous method is "the cap of pitch" [*ṭaḳīyat-al-zift*] in other words, making the pitch (which is the resin of certain coniferæ) flow upon the head of the patient hot, in the form of a skull-cap[1] and leaving it for weeks, nay months. Then the quack comes one day to pull off the cap—a day of distress for the patient!—since his hair, nay his skin also, sticks to the pitch. So he suffers tortures, and blood flows after the terrible uproar of pulling off the cap. Very often the patient faints on account of the intensity [p. 36] of the pain and the great loss of blood. Then after that there is brought half an oke[2] of common salt crystals and the head of the patient is rubbed with them violently.

Do not ask about the pains of this savage method. After a month has passed the "operation" is repeated. There is no need to witness it to know that the second "operation" is more grievous than the first because the healing of the wound is not complete and the new skin is pulled off a second time, and the pains are doubled. In view of all this, say whether this method is advantageous with its violence and danger! Even if this method were successful sometimes, the success would be due solely to the exclusion of the air by means of the cap prescribed against the parasite, because it ranks as a parasite called aerobic, that is "air-loving."

[1] [*Ḳalansuwa*, or *ḳulansiya*, the name of a tight-fitting cap often worn under a turban. Tr.]
[2] [See above, p. 111.]

4: Walker E-4 (no date) 1934 (ca. 1890) MR13 Fellahin MR13 Egypt MR1

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XX

SHAHḲA

F 164

THE "old wives" of the provinces generally use the name *shahḳa* for the malady of small-pox, which attacks infants and appears in the form of vesicles full of a liquid which is at first pure, then it becomes turbid and bursts. The "old wives" of the provinces and the mothers of the infants assert that the occurrence of these vesicles is caused by a woman or a man glancing at the child with a look of admiration for its beauty, and delight in its loveliness. Then the child falls after that into the state of that illness. Hence it is called *shahḳa* (injury by the evil eye) or *naẓra* (evil glance). They "cure" it, as is well known, by the child's mother stealing from her neighbour a piece of her dough with which she smears those vesicles.

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The true explanation. There is no advantage known in smearing these vesicles with dough. As a matter of fact this method is one belonging to the village pick-pockets and provincial thieves. The history of absurdities preserves it, and transmitters hand it down. [p. 38.] In the beginning of the whole business it was a means of accomplishing the theft of a neighbour's property under the excuse of a "prescription order." For what woman would not give her neighbour a piece of dough to cure her poor child!

XXI

A "HARMLESS" PRESCRIPTION

E 759 218

ONE of the "old wives" prescribed for one of the leading men of Cairo, who complained of a wound in his leg, the following "prescription": Powdered leg of dove [columba] and greasy wax, the former being thrown into the latter after boiling. After cooling a little, the soft paste is taken and

4:Walker E-4 (no date) 1934 (ca. 1890) MR13 Fellahin MR13

season. The "old wives" "prescribe" for them the white of eggs mixed with spirit of tutty, or *tūtiyā khalīlī* (oxide of zinc and cadmium and their sulphates). As a result the eye will be "cured" with marvellous rapidity.

The true explanation. The "old wives" pretend that this tutty has a hidden power in attracting the redness of the eye and sucking it up completely. The truth of the matter is that the majority of the eyes which they diagnose as "split" are affected with chronic granular ophthalmia. They are affected by sharp twinges caused by congestion. [p. 42.] Indeed the spirit of tutty does influence temporarily, and that on account of its arresting the inflamed vessels whereby the eye becomes clear. But it lasts only for a little, until the malady returns with greater force.

The true treatment. There are special remedies for it, and certain operations. Let the patient, however, in these circumstances consult eye-specialists on account of the danger of this serious malady.

XXV

ḤASAN AGḤĀ IN DAMANHŪR

Ḥasan Agḥā, above-mentioned, is famous for the "cure" of stone, and extracting it from the urinary bladder. His reputation is widespread, and patients resort to him from all quarters. (And not only those suffering from stone but from any illness in the bladder of uncertain symptoms.) He has an agency in Damanhūr which he has made like a hospital for his numerous patients. His method is to begin by bringing a large plate full of hot water, in which he seats the patient for a little. Then he inserts two fingers of his left hand inside the man's rectum and slips between them a knife with which he wounds the patient's vitals. The blood flows in torrents. Sometimes the patient faints when he sees the blood; sometimes he screams asking for relief. Then our clever quack

4: Walker E-4 (no date) 1934 MR13 Fellahīn MR13
(ca. 1890)

(Ḥasan Aghā) seizes this opportunity and smears a pebble (which he had previously prepared [p. 43] with the help of hospital servants or surgical attendants) with the blood of the patient. After certain exertions and the display of a little effort (to complete the deception) he hands over to the patient the stone moist with blood. This is the method of Ḥasan Aghā who obtains enormous wealth in return for his fatigue and service on behalf of the Egyptian world. For his easy circumstances are due to many ignorant folk who are in a worse state than beasts of burden since there is no value in life or health among them. But it is a pity that Ḥasan Aghā is to-day (June, 1894) engaged in prison, since the Government arrested him and the hand of Justice took revenge on him for killing one of the patients in his agency. Do not ask about what grief the people of those parts had when they suffered their famous "surgeon." We wish the excellent Aghā, aforementioned, a good life in penal servitude at Ṭurra[1] and we hope that Allah will inspire his devotees with intellect to guide them aright thereby, when the calamities of diseases afflict them.

XXVI

THE INJECTION WITH "THE BITTER TOY"

For long we have heard from people about extravagances in the matter of injection, and that it produces fat in those who are lean and slender. When we asked certain people as to the composition of the substances entering into the injection they answered that that was the knowledge of the womenfolk. [p. 44.] Allah decreed, however, that a certain woman of Cairo came to indicate to me one day what it did to her daughter who complained of the flow of blood with the feces and violent dysentery. So I asked her concerning the cause. She hesitated a little; then she said: I went to an "old wife" famous for injection in order that she might attend to my daughter because she was lean. She produced "*the Bitter Toy*" (*al-la'ba al-murra*) and boiled it in pig's grease for half an hour, and then placed it in a metal syringe, and bade me hold the

[1] [A wel-known convict establishment near Cairo. Tr.]

957 girl firmly and inject the liquid, which was boiling, into her anus. After that she began rolling her upon the tiled floor to smother her screams on account of the intensity of the pain. She fainted and we sprinkled water on her face. She has been ill ever since that day.

The true explanation. We do not know whether " the bitter toy " is what is named " bitter sweet " (*al-ḥulwa al-murra*)[1] or not. But on the supposition that it is, then we do not know of its possessing these peculiarities. We do not deny that the injection of fats and certain extremely greasy substances into the rectum has attained a certain repute in creating nourishment on account of the quickness of its absorption by a power greater than that of the stomach. But this savage method, namely, its injection at boiling-point, we have never heard of except in Egypt. No wonder she is the Mother of Wonders !

[p. 45.] In this place we call upon those who care to preserve the bloom and nourishment of their bodies not to follow the counsels of the " old wives," but to abandon those old absurdities. Let them be recorded in the history of the Past, because by placing them in history there is built up a new age. And especially (does this apply to) the inhabitants of Cairo, who claim nowadays to be humane and civilized.

[1] [Or *Dulcamara.* Tr.]

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

10.

The Well Zemzem.

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The well Zemzem is the miraculous well in the Mosque of Mekka. Pilgrims drink from it and are accustomed to carry vials of its water home with them. In a very similar song of Dalman's (P. 8; from Ḥawāra in Aglûn in Palestine) the Zemzem well is addressed, but it means a girl. Perhaps our song is also to be thus understood.

Ya bīrî Zemzem, salabik selāsil,
weš-šurbě minnik dawa lim-mesāfir.
Ya bīrî Zemzem salabik ḥarīr,
weš-šurbě minnik dawa lil-'alīl.

Thou Zemzem well, thy ropes are like chains,
And to drink from thee is medicine for the traveler.
Thou Zemzem well, thy ropes are like silk,
● [757] And to drink from thee is medecine for the sick.

1. 2. This is a draught-well. Its ropes are as strong as chains and as soft as silk.

9: Klunzinger D-5 (1863-1875) 1878
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

special dainty on this day. Saturday is named "the Sabbath of the light," from the celebrated sacred fire, which on this day bursts forth in the Greek Church of the Sepulchre at Jerusalem, and on this account the Christian brethren there annually get up a spectacle, which often terminates in deadly blows and renders the intervention of the Turkish, and consequently Mohammedan soldiery necessary. On this day the Mohammedan faithful strengthen their eyes with eye-powders; everybody has a vein opened, or gets himself cupped, a custom which prevails in many places in the West also, and in Egypt, Mohammedan as it is, coloured Easter eggs are also eaten. People take *kishk*, that is, a decoction of wheat with sourmilk, boil it with eggs, and stick it with the coloured shells of the eggs above the doors to adorn the entrance for all time coming and ward off spirits. On Easter Sunday the "great feast of the Christians" (*'id en-nusdra*) these hold a grand reception, with sherbet and holiday gifts, the Mohammedans in a friendly and neighbourly way call upon the Christians as the latter did upon them during Bairam. The Easter Monday of the Copts, whose festivals are settled by the Greek calendar, is the universal spring festival for the adherents of both religions. The night before onions, beans, and a bouquet of roses are laid under the bed-cushions and slept upon. On Easter Monday the onions are crushed and stuck with some water on the door; the beans are stuck on the bar, and the roses are used as a nosegay. At the first streak of daylight everybody moves abroad, this being the day of *shimm en-nesim*, that is, "air-smelling," or more poetically "sipping the zephyr." People go to the gardens or other attractive spots, and pass, if possible, the whole day there. At the most-frequented places sellers of coffee, sherbet, buza, and cooked meats establish themselves. A company of friends may take an Easter lamb with them, kill it at the rendezvous they have selected, and prepare *tanur*, that is, they cut up the meat in several pieces and bake it in an improvised earth-oven; or they make *shauirma*, that is, the whole lamb with the skin and hair on is placed on a spit and roasted at the fire. The day is spent